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RAYATS OF RANGPUR

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SADAR HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARY RANGPUR



Foreword.

A short account of the progress of local administration in the district of Rangpur during recent years is likely to prove of interest and be a source of instruction to the people for whose benefit and advantage that administration has been carried on. Two points have, however, to be made quite clear. This publication does not possess the imprimatur of any official authority and has no pretensions of being an official document in any sense. It is not an up-to-date Gazetteer of the district, nor does it seek to give a comprehensive account of the work of all the departments of the administration. It only touches those spheres which are directly concerned with the material and intellectual progress of the people of mofussal areas. It has been written at the request of the Rangpur public, and is being published chiefly for the enlightenment of the people of the district. It is true that there are official reports dealing with most of the subjects treated in this note; but these reports are not always available to the public, their point of view is somewhat different, they do not fall in as a continuous narrative over any number of years and for any particular district, and are not a self-contained and interconnected account pointing to any definite goal of progress. The second point on which it is desired to lay special emphasis is that it is not the object of this work to draw attention to the individual efforts of any official or non-official gentleman in furthering any of the schemes herein described, but rather to bring into prominence the problems of local administration, the many-sided wants and needs of the people of a mofussal district, the schemes for their progress and the amelioration of their condition, which have already been devised by Government, and the plan of work which, in the light of actual experience, seems to offer the most hopeful results.

There is another point of view from which this record might be of use. Difficulty has hitherto been felt on account of the want of any real co-operation on the part of the people in any schemes of local improvement or progress. The zeal and enthusiasm which the people of Rangpur of all classes have displayed in all schemes of public utility, recently taken up, demonstrate conclusively that the dawn of a new era has begun, and the people have cast aside their cloak of lethargy and indifference and are prepared to take their share of work and responsibility. But in order to be able to arouse local enthusiasm and guide it into useful and fruitful channels, one must be prepared for constant demands on one's patience and sympathy and be always ready to look at difficulties from a point of view different to his own. Another serious impediment has been the lack of funds with which to finance the many imperative reforms dealing with the teeming population of Bengal districts. For this difficulty also, Rangpur has indicated a solvent. Judged on the standard of what has been actually achieved in this district within the last few years and the amount of financial assistance which has been obtained from the people for schemes of all grades from the humblest rural school to the establishment of a University College requiring seven lakhs of rupees for a start, I think, it can safely be maintained that provided the money required is for schemes, the benefits of which are readily realizable by the people, and the same qualities of tact, sympathy, and resourcefulness are brought into play for arousing popular enthusiasm, the response need never be disappointing. A publication of this kind with the avowed object of imparting information and instruction to the local public is in itself a happy augury of the better understanding which is daily gaining ground between the people and the officials in the Presidency of Bengal.

There is perhaps even a still wider and more ambitious justification for the publication of this brochure. Attention has been drawn in these pages to the leeway which has to be made good before some amount of homogeneity may be introduced into

the life of the people, and the great gap bridged which now separates the educated and the enlightened classes of the Indian community from the vast majority of the agricultural and rural classes who are as yet so little touched by the elevating and formative forces of modern civilization. If the progress made in this district during the last few years may seem to be somewhat too rapid and of a hothouse nature, the real explanation is not that the pace has been forced but that there are such vast stretches of empty space in rural India, bereft of the most elementary signposts of civilization, that even a very modest attempt to introduce some of the simplest amenities of modern life may appear to be dictated by an unbridled and irresponsible zeal for reforms. At any rate, a discussion of these aspects of the daily life of the people of a mofussal district in India would help to bring home the truth of the observation that the future destiny of the country cannot be entirely shaped in the Council halls of the Empire, but much silent, slow, and patient work has still to be done before the foundation will be securely built on which regenerated India could take her stand.

This note is, therefore, written to serve as a land-mark in the history of the life of the district in its career of self-help and co-operation with the authorities, both as an encouragement to the people of Rangpur to carry on the good work which has been so well begun, and also to serve to help other districts which might like to tread on its footsteps.

Rangpur, January, 1918.

RANGPUR TO-DAY.

A STUDY IN LOCAL PROBLEMS OF A BENGAL DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

TOWN LIFE.

In the whole district of Rangpur with a population of 2,385,330 and an area of 3,479 square miles, there are only 6 towns with a population of over 2,000 souls. Of these town-ships the headquarters of the district alone has a population of over 10,000 people.

The town of Rangpur like most other mofussal towns of Bengal may be described as mainly a colony which has settled down round the walls of the Government offices and courts. The life of the town is therefore the life of the lawyers, pleaders and mukhtears who practise in the local courts; the Government officers who are posted at the headquarters of the district and who preside at these offices and courts; and the *amlas* or ministerial officers who carry on the business of these courts. The various educational institutions of the town with their staff of teachers and their population of students form another minor centre of life in the

town The resident zamindars and other subordinate landowners, the products of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal have also their own distinct place in the social hierarchy, their own special occupations, ambitions and their own measure of the happiness and responsibilities of life The mercantile and the business community are also represented, chiefly by the small retail shopkeepers and dealers and by a few men doing business on a larger scale in jute If we exclude agriculture which sustains and feeds all the avenues of prosperity and wealth in the district there is no other form of productive industry either in the town or in the district From another point of view there are broadly speaking three different sections into which the population of the town may be divided The most important because the most alert and intellectual are the middle class *bladiologs* both Hindus and Muhammadans, who have taken most advantage of modern English education and have assimilated and are influenced by those ideals of civic virtue and national progress which follow in the wake of modern culture and education Then there are the inheritors of the monopoly in land created by the Permanent Settlement amongst whom there is such a strong temptation to fall a victim to self indulgence stagnation, and indolence which are natural to people who are in the enjoyment of material advantages which they have not earned by the sweat of their brow No doubt there are praiseworthy exceptions amongst this class and a type of a young zamindar who looks after and manages his own affairs takes his fair share of the civic duties of his native town and delights in physical excellence of the athlete and sportsman—is not altogether unrepresented in the town There are also some solitary exceptions amongst them who make use of their leisure in cultivating the intellect and serving their period of apprenticeship in the field of belles lettres Lastly we have the philistines pure and simple the money lenders the shopkeepers and all those money grabbers who belonging to whatever class or profession cannot lift their eyes from the ground and can think of nothing higher or nobler than their own sordid gains or losses

2. Mr. Yusuf Ali, in his incisive description of Town Life in India, has observed with much truth that social life

Increasing
unity & pub-
lic spirit

in Indian towns is wanting in unity, and civic enterprise yet lacks that strong moral incentive which makes the needs of the many the opportunity for the

devotion of the few. It is a matter for some congratulation that within recent years there has been a very marked improvement in the social and public life of Rangpur towards unity and corporate effort. Some of her citizens like Rai Bahadur Mrityunjoy Rai Choudhury, Vice-Chairman of the District Board, Dr. Muhammad Muzammal, Chairman of the Sadar Local Board, Babu Jogesh Chandra Sarkar, Vice-Chairman of the Rangpur Municipality have performed onerous civic duties, in purely honorary capacities, with considerable devotion and at great sacrifice of their own personal affairs. More conspicuous has been the civic patriotism of men like Babu Bhabani Prasanna Lahiri, Rai Bahadur Surat Chandra Chatterjee and others who have given so largely of their time and energy for the public weal and in the service of their town. New institutions for corporate life and for the free play of social and civic instincts have come into being, and old and decaying institutions have received a fresh access of life and energy and have been put in the way of doing really useful work. There has also been a marked change in the tone of public life of the town. By universal consent the Municipal Commissioners, specially the younger members are taking a far keener and greater personal interest in their work than was done before. There is a strong desire for fair play and appreciation of civic virtues displayed either by officials or non-officials. The relations between Hindus and Muhammadans are most cordial and both communities rally round all good causes with equal ardour and look upon all schemes of public utility with equal interest. The social life of the town, at least of the intellectual classes, has been galvanized by the inauguration of the Rangpur Institute and Club which has provided a common meeting ground for all the leisured classes of the town and is perhaps one of the most popular and virile institution of its

'kind in the whole of mofussal Bengal.' The North Bengal Sahitya Parishad with its headquarters at Rangpur, and the Public Library of Rangpur form centres for the intellectual recreation of the town. The North Bengal Zamindars' Association is also an unique venture, and its ideal of establishing corporate life amongst the zamindars is excellent, though it has not yet succeeded in making its influence very widely felt. These new institutions have far greater vitality and have attracted much more real interest of the people than the stereo-typed corporate institutions like the Hindu and Muhammadan Associations.

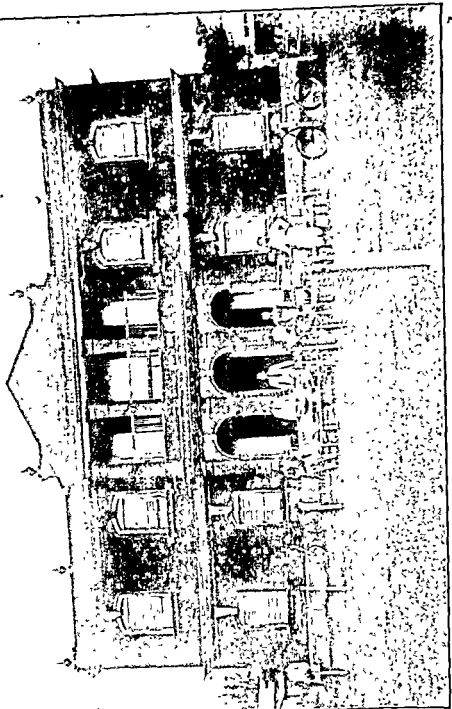
3. The progress made in the corporate life of the town may best be described from two points of view. We may
 Method of first take up the external improvements in the town,
 treatment the construction of new edifices for public institutions, improvements of roads and other conveniences and the amenities of town life generally, and then describe some of the public institutions in which the activities of the corporate life of the town are centred:

4. Roughly speaking there are four sources from which funds are available under existing circumstances, for
 Agencies for improving the amenities of life in mofussal towns of
 progress Bengal. They are:—

- (1) The income of the town Corporation or Municipality.
- (2) Grants of the District Board.
- (3) Special grants made by Government.
- (4) Contributions and benefactions of the public.

The agencies for the supply of the motive power for carrying out improvements are:—

- (1) The office-bearers of the Municipality and the District Board.
- (2) Public spirited non-official gentlemen who have the desire and capacity for discharging honorary duties.
- (3) The District Officer, the Sub-Divisional Officer, and the other Government officers who are responsible either for the general administration of the district or who



RANGPUR INSTITUTE AND CLUB.

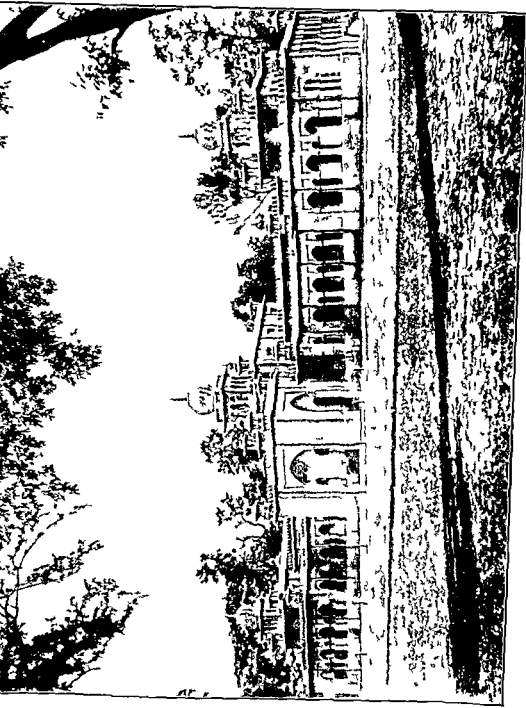
are in charge of special departments of the administration.

It may be safely said that the progress which has been made during last few years in improving the social and intellectual environment of Rangpur is entirely due to the harmonious, sincere and continuous co-operation of all the above agencies. In few districts in Bengal it may be safely asserted is there such cordial co-operation between officials and non-officials of all classes and communities, Hindus and Muhammadans, pleaders and zamindars, and such an united and earnest desire of all sections to help forward every scheme of public utility and uphold the good name and credit of the Rangpur district.

Mention has been made above of the public spirit and devotion of some of the leading citizens of the town. A more emphatic acknowledgment is necessary of the magnificent response which the zamindars and the people of Rangpur have made to every call made upon them for financial assistance, either for the good of their town or district or for a wider cause beyond the ken of their own immediate surroundings. For the great European War this district has contributed nearly 2 lakhs of rupees, and its contribution to the War Loan amounted to about 15 lakhs of rupees. For the Rangpur college and other educational institutions the people of the district have contributed nearly 8 lakhs of rupees. Their contribution for other minor works of local improvement during the last 3 years amounted to at least a lakh of rupees. Yet during the last triennium at least one year, 1915, was one of great agricultural depression for the district and business has been generally dull on account of the War, and the jute market has remained comparatively depressed. But still there has been no murmur in paying for the public weal, and there has been positive enthusiasm in places where the schools, dispensaries and other works of public utility have slowly raised their heads and spread their beneficent influence. There was a genuine outburst of public feeling in the town when some officious Calcutta papers attacked the War Loan work of the district. Rangpur still gratefully

cherishes the memory of Raja Mahima Ranjan Rai Choudhury of Kakina, Raj Mohan Rai Choudhury of Kundi, Maharaja Gobinda Lal Ray of Tajhat, and Raja Janaki Ballave Sen of Duml for their numerous benefactions, and some of the most useful public institutions of the town testify to their generosity and public spirit. During the last 4 years the present Raja of Tajhat, Raja Gopal Lal Ray, and Rai Bahadur Annada Mohan Rai Choudhury have been most conspicuous for their princely gifts and have never said 'no' to any good cause. They have contributed nearly 2 lakhs of rupees each for public objects. Equally remarkable has been the liberality of the Maharaja of Cossimbazar who in spite of the numerous calls on his generosity from practically the whole of Bengal has during the same period contributed considerably over 1 lakh in Rangpur. The Raja of Kakina's contribution of Rs 50,000/ in cash to the Bengal Ambulance Corps was also a notable performance.

5. It is a common talk of the town that the new station road, the parks and grounds and the numerous public buildings which have recently sprung into existence have changed the look of the town beyond all recognition, so much so that people who visit it only after 4 or 5 years have some difficulty in recognising it. Dr Bentley, the Sanitary Commissioner of Bengal, remarked the other day that in driving down the main road to the Civil station he felt that he was entering an English suburban town. The boulevard like main station road with a paved footpath on one side and a green walk on the other and its avenue of fine shady trees is the chief attraction and is perhaps one of the finest roads in any mofussal station. The station portion of this road, which is maintained by the District Board, was constructed during 1915-17 at a cost of Rs 17,145/. It used to be full of ruts in the centre and knee deep in dust and mud at the flanks. The District Board has passed a resolution prohibiting the use of this road by loaded bullock carts and the Commissioner has upheld the order. Without this prohibition this beautiful road will soon be reduced again to its original state of



DISTR CT BOARD OFFICE BUILDING RANGPUR

neglect and discomfort. The new District Board building with its fine straccione architecture and its array of domes and minarets cannot fail to arrest attention. The building cost nearly Rs.50,000/- and is one of the finest office buildings outside Calcutta. The foundation of this building was laid by Mr. H. F. Samman, the Commissioner of the Division in August 1915 and the building was opened by the Hon'ble Nawab Sir Shamsul Huda, Member of the Executive Council in October 1916. Another handsome edifice is the new hall which holds both the Dramatic Institute and the Rangpur Institute and Club and is also utilised for convening large meetings and conferences. This building was constructed almost entirely from public subscription and cost Rs. 30,000/-. The Raja of Tajhat and Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandi of Cossimbazar were the principal contributors. Babu Bhujendra Nath Mukharjee, late Sadar Sub-Divisional officer and Babu Brisanta Kumar Bhowmick, late Assistant Surgeon of the Sadar Hospital were chiefly instrumental in collecting subscriptions for the building and bringing the scheme to a successful issue. The Hon'ble Mr. Lyon laid the foundation of the building and it was opened by Mr. H. F. Samman in 1915. The Edward Memorial Hall which was completed in 1914 is another public building which was constructed out of public subscriptions realised on the occasion of the coronation of King Edward VII. The new middle English school to the west of the Municipal office was completed in 1916, and the handsome annexure to the Girls' school also completed in 1915 are other notable addition to the row of public buildings which adorn this part of Rangpur.

6. Of the agencies noted above which are instrumental in developing and improving mofussal towns in Bengal a few words about the Rangpur Municipality will not be out of place here. About the Rangpur District Board which has to look after the whole of the District mention will be made later on. The present regime with Raja Gopal Lal Ray of Tajhat as Chairman and Babu Jogesh Chandra Sarkar as Vice-Chairman who were first elected to their present office in

The Rangpur
Municipality

1912, has I believe been conducive to more harmonious work, as there has been greater unity of purpose amongst the Municipal Commissioners themselves, and more friendly co operation with the District Officer for the improvement of the town. The result has been that the Municipality has already carried out many useful reforms during the last few years, and foundation has also been laid for more useful work in the future. The careful reassessment of the town and the patient and impartial disposal of all objections of rate payers by the Municipal Commissioners, resulting in a net increase of an annual income of Rs 8,000/- is one of the most useful achievements of the present Municipality. Very important improvements have also been made in the town market, an institution which provides so many of the amenities of life for all the residents of the town. The improvement effected during the last two years in the town market affords a good example of the happy results of the co operation of the different agencies noted above. At the request of the District Magistrate, the Rajā of Tajhat and the Lady Zamindar of Monthana who are the proprietors of the market made over a sum of Rs 5,000/- to the Municipality for the improvement of the town bazar. The District Engineer who is also a Municipal Commissioner prepared plans and estimates of the improvements and saw them carried out under his personal supervision. The widening and metalling of the paths inside the market the construction of pucca drains and of masonry platforms for meat and fish stalls, better arrangements for lighting at night are amongst the improvements effected in the market. At the request of the District Magistrate the proprietors have also appointed an Honorary Committee for regulating the affairs of the market and preventing the artificial inflation of prices by unscrupulous *farias* and middle men. A comprehensive programme for the drainage of the town is another scheme to which the Municipality has given attention during the last two years. The Sanitary Engineer to Government has drawn up a scheme which is now pending before Government for sanction. Larger sums have been spent recently on the repair and mainten-

ance of roads, and thanks to the generous assistance of the District Board the roads of the town generally are in a much better condition now than they were only 3 or 4 years ago. But it will require the constant attention of the Municipality to maintain the roads in their present satisfactory condition. There has also been a steady improvement in the lighting arrangements of the town and within recent years a number of lights has been increased. The introduction of petrol lights at important centres has also been a great boon. Additions are being steadily made to the number of scavenging carts, and the adoption of a type of a locally manufactured cart with buckets for the removal of night soil has been greatly appreciated by the Sanitary Department.

7. Turning to local institutions the most prominent place

Local Insti-
tutions

must be given to the new Indian Station Club known as the Rangpur Institute which is housed in the eastern wing of the Town Hall. It was started in 1914. The District Magistrate has been elected President for the last 3 years. There are 61 members of whom 25 are pleaders, 18 officials, 14 zamindars and the rest private gentlemen. Some of the leading Muhammadan gentlemen also belong to the club. The monthly subscription is Re. 1/- and there is a tennis fee. All subscription are punctually realized. There are two tennis courts which are crowded every evening, and members have generally to sit out and take their chance. District officials very often play tennis at this club and most of them are also members. Bridge, chess, and other games are regularly played, and every evening there is an attendance of from 10 to 15 members who do not generally leave the club till very late in the evening. It is generally admitted that since the starting of the club drinking as a vice has almost disappeared from among the *bhadralog* community, and there has been a perceptible improvement in the morals of the members. Dinners and picnics are very often arranged for by the members of the club.

The Rangpur Amateur Dramatic Association is also a very useful social institution, and exercises a very healthy influence over the social life of the town. The District Magistrate is the President

of this institution also and the District Engineer is the Vice-President. There are 81 members. The association is of some standing now and was started by Mr H Skrine when he was Collector of the district. The old Theatre Hall was the gift of Raja Mahima Ranjan Rai Choudhury of Kakina. The Association has received a fresh impetus since the erection of the new Theatre Hall. New scenes, dresses and other paraphernalia costing about Rs 3,500/- have been purchased, and thanks chiefly to the energy and capacity of Babu Basanta Kumar Bhowmick and Babu Kailash Chandra Gupta, the Stage Manager, the institution has gained greatly in popularity. Many plays have been staged during the last three years. The transfers of Babu Bhujendra Nath Mukharjee and Babu Basanta Kumar Bhowmick were a great loss both to the Institute and the Dramatic Association, but other members have filled up the gap caused by the departure of these gentlemen and both institutions are still just as flourishing as ever.

The Rangpur Library and Reading Room located in the right wing of the Edward Hall building—is another old and useful institution. It had however fallen on evil times and when the District Magistrate was elected President of the institution in 1914, subscriptions were heavily in arrears,—the books were found in a neglected condition, there was a lack of almirahs and other furniture, and the stock of books in urgent need of replenishing. Steps were taken to reduce arrears and subscriptions were collected for the purchase of books and furniture. A gift of Rs 500/- from Rai Mutyunjoy Rai Choudhury was of great assistance to the Library and handsome grants were also twice received in 1913 and again in 1915 from the Commissioner. There are now 109 members, the Reading Room is now one of the most popular and useful institutions of the town.

The North Bengal Sahitya Parishad, a literary association, is a far more ambitious institution and is a branch of the well-known Sahitya Parishad of Calcutta. It was founded in 1905 and owes much of its popularity and influence to the energy and devotion of its able Secretary Babu Surendra Chandra Rai Choudhury. The

Magistrate is the President of this institution also. There are 352 members. During the last three years some old manuscripts have been printed, and the collection of old manuscripts has steadily increased. There are at present valuable manuscript *punthis* in the library of the Parishad. A museum has also been attached to the library where old coins, images, inscriptions etc. have been collected from all parts of the division and the Barendra country. An additional room has just been constructed and valuable manuscripts, collections and images etc. are being carefully arranged in this room. Lord Carmichael paid two visits to the Parishad and expressed himself as being greatly impressed. At the last annual conference Sir Ashutosh Mukharjee read a learned paper on "Bengali Literature" which was greatly appreciated. The Parishad publishes a quarterly magazine which contains learned articles and papers written by the members, and other well-known literary men of Bengal.

The North Bengal Zamindars' Association is another very useful and important institution. It used to be an association of the zamindars of the district, but now is the representative association of all the zamindars of Northern Bengal. A Zamindari Bank is also attached to the Association. The Association has 94 members and the nominal capital of the Bank is rupees 5 lakhs. The President and Secretary are elected annually Raja Gopal Lal Ray of Tajhat is the President and the energetic zamindar of Kundi, Babu Surendra Chandra Ray Choudhury is the Secretary of both the Association and the Bank. The object of the Association is to give a corporate expression to the views and wishes of the zamindars so that their interests might not be neglected and this important body might have a voice in the councils of the district and the Presidency. The main object of the Bank is to give financial assistance to embarrassed and involved zamindars, and the Association is also prepared in suitable cases to take up the management of properties when the proprietors are unable to manage it themselves. The settlement of boundary and other disputes between neighbouring zamindars is also in the programme

of the Association. These are most laudable objects and during last year the Association succeeded in making up a long standing dispute between the Bamandanga and Lepa zamindars, and 2 or 3 other such cases are pending arbitration. The Association has just taken up the management of the property of Babu Sarat Chandra Rai Choudhury, zamindar of Itakumari and of Babu Sarit Ranjan Das of Kundi. The establishment of good relationship between zamindars and their tenants is also one of the principal objects of the Association and at the last meeting of that body held on the 8th of July a resolution was passed requesting the District Officer to give the Association an opportunity of bringing their influence to bear on any case of improper treatment of their tenants by zamindars which might come to the notice of the District Officer. It has been suggested that it would serve a very useful purpose if the Zamindars' Association had some organization for the training of zamindari Tahsildars and other *amlas*. At present difficulty is experienced in securing suitable men and in very few cases is it possible to get men with the required training. If all the zamindars of North Bengal patronized such an institution, there will be a fairly good opening for a young man who would be trained in the proposed school. The school should provide instruction in elementary account keeping improved agricultural methods, elementary rent laws, survey etc. The minimum qualification for admission should be a Middle School leaving certificate. Steps are already being taken to start an institution on the above lines. From the point of view of the District Officer it would be a good thing if the Association would have a responsible outdoor officer who could be utilized to make enquiries and submit reports on behalf of zamindars in any case where such enquiry would be considered desirable.

Then there are the political Associations known as People's Association and the Anjuman but they have not shown much active interest in the affairs of the district recently and are more formal than living institutions, being out of touch with the pulse of the people and doing very little active good for any community.

8. Though the relations of the Muhammadans and Hindus are quite cordial, the leaders of the Muhammadan community have not sufficient unity of purpose amongst themselves, and as a result do not exercise any substantial influence over the life of the town or even over the life of their own community. Khan Bahadur Taslimuddin is the formal head of the community in the town, but Moulvi Abul Fattah and Dr. Muhammad Muzammal have also much influence, while Moulvi Asaf Khan represents the rising generation. A greater unity of purpose and the sinking of personal and petty differences for the good of the community would greatly enhance the influence of the Muhammadan community. The Local Muhammadan institutions such as the Madrassa, the Muhammadan hostel and the Muhammadan Girls' school are likely to be far more prosperous institutions than they are at present if they receive greater honorary assistance from the leaders of the Muhammadan community. It is hoped that with the rapid spread of education amongst the Muhammadans there will be an increase of honorary workers amongst the community and there will emerge gradually a stronger practical appreciation of civic virtues.

9. There have been some important functions celebrated in Rangpur town during the last 4 years. His Excellency the first Governor of Bengal, Lord Carmichael, paid a visit to Rangpur in November 1913, and received addresses from the various local bodies and associations.

The need of a local college was first broached in the formal address which was then presented to His Excellency. An important annual meeting of the North Bengal Literary Association was held in 1916 when Sir Ashutosh Mukharjee delivered a Presidential address in Bengali. The Commissioner's visit each year to the town has been signalized by meetings of President Panchayets and other leading gentlemen from the interior of the district, and also by meetings of successful agriculturists from all parts of the district. The final games of football tournaments in connection with the Hardinge Shield and the Tajhat Shield have

been played off in Rangpur in the month of July every year since 1914. November last witnessed the impressive ceremony of the laying of the foundation ceremony of the Carmichael College by His Excellency Lord Carmichael. On the same occasion a very important and instructive Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition was held in the new District Board building. In last May we had perhaps the most enthusiastic and largely attended public meeting that has ever been held in Rangpur. Over four thousand people mustered to the meeting in aid of recruitment to the Bengali Regiment. A few Bengali soldiers, their officer, Lieutenant Taylor, the special recruiting officer and Colonel Boudier were present. The veteran leader, Mr Surendra Nath Banerjee delivered an impassioned oration which will be long remembered in Rangpur. The important service done by these functions is that they serve to lift us from our immediate surroundings and bring us in touch with larger currents of life. They also widen our outlook and help us to shake off the dull monotony of existence, at least, for the time being.

10. What has been described above about the progress in solidarity and self-consciousness in the life of the Rangpur town, has been echoed in varying degrees in the headquarters towns of the outlying sub divisions of Gaibandha, Kurigram, and Nilphamari. The progress has been most marked in Kurigram due chiefly to the personality of the Sub Divisional Officer Babu Srimanta Kumar Das Gupta who has been fortunate enough to be left continuously for nearly 5 years, and to the quiet, unassuming devotion of the Munsiff, Babu Panna Lal Banerjee, and to the enthusiastic and willing support which these two officers have received from such public spirited gentlemen as Dr Jogesh Chandra Ray, President of the Union Committee and Secretary to the Dispensary Committee, Babu Jogesh Chandra Rai Choudhury, Vice Chairman, Local Board and Honorary Magistrate and more particularly Babu Harendra Krishna Ray, the local Manager of the Baharband Estate of Maharaja Sir Manendra Chandra Nandi of Cossimbazar.

Babu Jogesh Chandra Ray is an Assistant Surgeon carrying on a large private practice of his own, and it may be truly said of him that he has made the needs of the public the opportunity for the devotion of all his energies and time. Such an example of devotion to civic duties is extremely rare in mofussal towns. There is no Municipality in the town but there is a self-constituted Sanitary Committee, which has been recently merged into the Union Committee, which looks after the requirements of the town! The total annual income of the committee is only Rs. 3,000/- and the money is realised as voluntary subscriptions from the people. Commissioner, Mr. Marindin described this Sanitary Committee as being as good an example of real Local Self-Government as is to be found anywhere in Bengal. The sanitation, lighting and scavenging arrangements of the town do great credit to the public spirit of the citizens, and the ability and devotion of the Secretary, Babu Jogesh Chandra Ray. In Kurigram also there is a very useful and well patronized Club and Reading Room and Library. The Club has 41 members and every evening there is a Bridge Table going and at least half a dozen members present. The Sub-Divisional Officer is himself a keen sportsman and plays football and cricket with the students and the games are regularly played both by boys and the residents of the town. A public park is about to be laid out and land is being acquired for the purpose. A splendid building for the local High School was completed in 1916 and cost Rs. 10,000/- of which the public contributed Rs. 21,050/- and the rest was obtained as a grant from Government. A fine building has also been recently erected for the local Girls' school which cost the committee Rs. 7,500/-. The scheme for metalling the main road has also been taken up and will be completed as more funds are available. The feeling between Hindus and Muhammadans and between officials of all departments and the non-official public is most excellent in this sub-division.

Although in Gaibandha non-official gentlemen as a body do not take the same prominent part in shaping the public life of the town as at Kurigram yet the material resources of the town

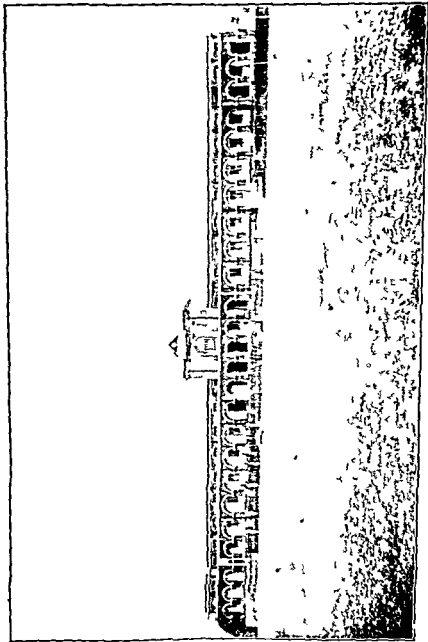
are greater and the material progress of the town within recent years has been more rapid and marked than perhaps in any other mofussil town of the district. Gaibandha is also an important centre of Muhammadan influence and culture in the district. The causes which have contributed to the rapid growth of the material prosperity of Gaibandha are the rapid extension of the jute industry in this part of the sub division, the opening of the railway and the comparative salubrity of the climate of the sub division. The population of the town has increased from 1,635 in 1901 to 3,420 in 1911 and the present population is 5,138 with density of 2,205 per square mile. There is an increasing desire on the part of all classes of people of the mofussil to flock to the town. The attractions are greater facilities for education, better medical help, opportunities of making a fortune in non agricultural occupations and the amenities of town life generally. The average annual export of jute during the last 3 years has been 2,73,117 maunds and is almost as great as from the town of Rangpur itself. The town is thus ripe for the advent of a Municipality and a scheme for the establishment of a Municipality has again been submitted to the Commissioner. A comprehensive scheme for the sanitation and drainage of the town has been prepared by the Sanitary Department but is being held up pending the creation of the Municipality. In the meanwhile the combined Sanitary Committee and the Union Committee is looking after the sanitation, lighting and other conveniences of the town. There are altogether 15 members, the Sub Divisional Officer being the President and Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee, L.M.S., a qualified medical practitioner is the Secretary. The income of the Sanitary Committee last year was Rs 1922/ and a staff of one Tax Collector, and 9 Sweepers was maintained. On the whole the scavenging and lighting arrangements of the town are fairly satisfactory. As regards social and corporate life in the town there are signs of a growing feeling of common citizenship and an increasing desire for mutual help and good understanding amongst the people. Amongst social and political institutions of

the town the Anjuman Islamia is by far the most influential and active body. Its Secretary, Khan Shaheb Abdul Majid, is also the Secretary of the Central Co-operative Bank and the Islamia High School, and takes great interest in all matters of public utility, and is perhaps the most public spirited and helpful non-official residents of Gaibandha. The Anjuman Islamia watches over the political and educational interests of the Muhammadan community, and has a commendable record of useful work. It is at the intercession of the Anjuman that an M. E. School at Katlamari near Fulchhari and the present Muhammadan High School in Gaibandha were established, as also the Muhammadan hostel for the Moslem students. The Islamia has also taken great interest in the co-operative movement in the sub-division. It is specially satisfactory that although the Anjuman Islamia is such an active and virile institution in Gaibandha, the relations between Hindus and Muhammadans are most cordial in the sub-division. Both communities work shoulder to shoulder in all good causes, and there is no bigotry and religious antipathy even amongst the uneducated classes, and it is not uncommon for the one to attend weddings and other social and even religious ceremonies of the other. Thus the Saraswati puja is allowed to be observed in the Islamia High School and is celebrated by Hindu and Muhammadan boys alike, whereas students of both communities flock to Muhammadan religious ceremonies like the Moulud Sarif. There is also a Club and Public Library at Gaibandha, and an amateur Dramatic Association which is housed in the George Coronation Hall. It is a two storied building which also serves the purpose of a public Hall. It was constructed from public funds raised by Mr. Peters the late Sub-Divisional Officer and was completed in 1914. Besides the Coronation Hall, the fine Dispensary building, was completed in 1914, and the Veterinary Dispensary in 1915. The foundation stone of the New High School building was laid by the Commissioner on the 23rd February last and that of the Girls' School building by Mrs. Gupta on the same date. The estimate for the H. E. School is Rs. 21,000/- and that of the Girls'

School Rs 8000/ For the present the energetic Sub Divisional Officer Babu J C Dutt is relying entirely on local contribution for the completion of both these buildings and a sum of Rs 20 000/ has already been collected It is also proposed to construct a suitable building for the Central Co operative Bank and a site is being acquired for the purpose Babu J C Dutt is comparatively new to the sub division but he has already infused new life into the place and there are signs of active self help and a forward advance in all direction

In Nilphamari also there have been marked changes in recent years The new High School building completed in 1914 is one of the finest structures of its kind A great feature of the school are the fine boarding houses both for Hindus and Muhammadans which are attached to the school and the present energetic Sub Divisional Officer Babu Jogendra Lal Nandi has a scheme for enlarging and improving both the boarding houses at a cost of Rs 7,000/- A new M E School building is also to be constructed at a cost of Rs 12 000/ The Sub Divisional Officer has already collected the entire sum necessary to carry out both the above schemes Like Kurigram and Gaibandha there is now a combined Sanitary and Union Committee at Nilphamari which is doing useful work But there is not much public opinion or life in Nilphamari though the Sub Divisional Officer is a keen man and takes great interest in all the public movements of this district Nilphamari gave conspicuous support to the Rangpur College Scheme the War Loan and the Recruitment Movement

Besides the sub divisional headquarters towns, Saidpur and Lalmonirhat are also important centres of social and intellectual activities Both are headquarters of Railway districts and the superior officers are mostly Europeans whereas the ministerial staff consist of Bengalis of the *bhadralog* classes At Saidpur a fine building of the approved type has been just completed for the High School at a cost of Rs 27 000/ which was jointly contributed by the Education Department of Government, by the Railway Department and by the public The establishment of a Muni



NEW HIGH SCHOOL N LPHAMARI

cipality has been the crying need of Saidpur for long time past, as the adjoining *bustis* and the quarters of the town inhabited by the clerks of different offices are in a most insanitary condition and in urgent need of improvement. After prolonged correspondence for many years past, the agent has just consented to have a Municipality and a scheme has been submitted to the Commissioner. A fine Girls' school building was constructed last year and a new Theatre and Town Hall is now under construction. Lalmonirhat is a much smaller town than Saidpur but is making satisfactory progress. The new M. E. school and the Girls' school are good and promising institutions of their kind.

11. The desideratum of the future of the district is steady advance and progress in the direction of more sustained self-help and greater and more genuine co-operation between all sections of the community and between officials and non-officials. A spirit of give and take, forbearance, patience and good will should be the watchwords of all men who wish to serve their district and their country. The zamindars are doing a great deal, but much more is expected of them. No doubt every scheme that has been undertaken has owed its success a great deal to the financial support which has been received from the zamindars. But far more than financial assistance is looked for. A few more resident zamindars of the type of the Raja of Tajhat, will make a great difference to the town. The Muhammadans must also try and come more to the front by larger public service. A paid and permanent Secretary of the Municipality will be a great improvement. The excellent ideals of public duty which permeate the younger members of the Municipality should spread to all classes and civic renown should be the coveted goal of a far larger number of men than is the case at present.

CHAPTER II.

AGENCIES FOR PROGRESS IN RURAL AREAS

12. The condition of the people of rural areas of the district has been described in the Scheme for Village Improvement in the Rangpur District which was printed by the District Board in July last. The stagnation and inertia of the lower classes of India described in the report of the Committee on Co operation applies to a great degree to the people of this district also. Want of education and consequent want of foresight and thrift, a failure to save in good years to provide for lean ones, proneness to extravagance in ceremonies, fondness of costly litigation, and above all a resort to the moneylenders' door on the least provocation and without any thought of the future, are the most prominent features of the daily life of the villager and the principal impediments in the path of his progress. He is also so completely dependent on the fruits of a primitive system of agriculture, which again, even in Rangpur, depends so greatly on the vicissitudes of the season, that his future remains always very uncertain. Complexity of land tenures, the want of any authoritative record of rights, and the uncertainty and costliness of the remedies afforded by the existing civil and criminal courts are all serious difficulties with which the rayats have to contend. A naturally relaxing and enervating climate, the prevalence of malaria in certain seasons of the year, coupled with an ignorance and non observance of elementary rules of hygiene and sanitation account for the unsatisfactory health and poor physique of the majority of the

inhabitants. The raiyats' utter helplessness and dependence on others, whether it be the village *decania* or moneylender at his door, the Mukhtear or pleader in town, or the all powerful zamindar or his local agent, seem to keep him in a state of perpetual tutelage and exercise a most baneful and withering influence preventing the formation of those qualities of self-reliance and self-exertion which are the groundwork of progress in all living organisms. As a result there is no civic life, no bonds to unite even the well-to-do villagers to take any concerted action, to look after the common needs of the village, even in such elementary matters as village communication, water-supply and rural education. Every thing for the good of the village has therefore to be done, from outside, from the headquarters of the district or the sub-division, and there is neither much local support and seldom any local desire for progress.

Against the above impeding and adverse circumstances, account must be taken of the fact that the raiyat of Rangpur has his fields perhaps in the most fertile province of India. Droughts are far less common than in other parts of India, and the soil of the district appears to be capable of producing in abundance almost all the valuable crops of Bengal, jute, paddy, tobacco, sugarcane, potatoes and variety of rabi crops; and as a matter of fact large quantities of the above crops are actually grown, and at least half the cultivable soil bears more than one important crop in the year. During the last five years the average annual yield of jute from the district was nearly 10,00,000 bales, and thus from this source alone the raiyats got nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores of rupees a year. The sale of tobacco also brings something like 70 lakhs a year to the agriculturists. But even here it is a matter of regret that the cultivators are to a large extent in the hands of middlemen, who without helping in any way in the production of the agricultural wealth appropriate a large share of the profits. It has been calculated that both in jute and tobacco for every Rs. 10/- which the cultivator gets the middle-man makes Rs. 3/- to Rs. 4/-. But inspite of the draining up of a good portion of the profits

by unproductive parasites the forward and steady march of the rural in the path of material well being is unmistakable. To keep pace with the growing agricultural wealth of the district there has been a rapid expansion of Railways in the district, and at present the district is intersected by a network of railway lines which run to over 200 miles. There are 15 railway Stations in the district. Population has also rapidly increased and the rate of increase in the last decade was 10%. The majority of the population is Muhammadan, and amongst the Hindus the Raybangis predominate. Both are hardy and industrious agriculturists and a fair proportion of them do not show much signs of physical decadence. The health of the district has also greatly improved since the last earthquake and from the Sanitary Report of the Province for the last five years it appears that the mean ratio of death per thousand was 31.21 and was lower than that of most other districts in the Rajshahi Division.

Education is also advancing. The report for 1916-17 shows that the total number of schools in the district increased from 1,553 to 1,732 and the number of pupils attending these schools from 60,486 to 63,064. The people are mostly engaged in profitable agricultural industries are amenable to advice and there is a general awakening in rural areas for education and improvement of the general conditions of existence. The influence of public opinion in the towns including those of pleaders and zamindars is helpful and in favour of any schemes which are initiated by Government for improving the education of the people.

13. Before the introduction of the administrative reform technically known as the 'Circle System' practically the only local agency which was available for the improvement of the condition of the people of the rural areas of the district was the District Board.

Administrative machinery of rural areas.

But the District Board did not possess any agency subordinate to it which could really be made available for doing independent administrative work for improvement of rural areas.

The Union Committees provided for under Act III of 1885 did not fulfil this requirement. As pointed out in the report of the District Administration Committee, the Bill of 1883 provided for a scheme of local self-government in rural areas, but it was vetoed by the Secretary of State for India, and Act III of 1885 made the District Board the administrative unit of local self-government and left the Local Board and the Union Committee with no clearly defined powers and responsibilities. The main object of the Circle System is to create genuine self-governing local bodies in rural areas and to provide an agency for their control and guidance. Besides the District Board and the Circle System, we have the general departments of Government, like Agriculture, Education, and Co-operation which are also mainly concerned with the population of the rural areas, and which have special officers in most districts to carry on its own particular mission of progress.

The sources from which money can be drawn for work in rural areas may be enumerated as follows :—

- (1) The income of the District Board supplemented by special grants from Government.
- (2) The grants of special departments like Agriculture, Education, Co-operation.
- (3) The contributions of the people of the localities concerned, either in the shape of voluntary subscriptions, or by local taxation under section 118C of the Local Self-Government Act.

The key-note of the policy which has been pursued in this district during the last 3 or 4 years is harmonious co-ordination and co-operation between all the above agencies and departments for the advancement of the people of the district. Accordingly the officers of the general department from the District Officer downwards, the officers of special departments like Agriculture, Co-operative Credit, and Education have co-ordinated and worked according to a well-defined scheme with the object of helping the people to ameliorate their own condition and to learn to help them-

selves. It is under the aegis of the Circle System alone that it has been found possible to enlist the co-operation of the people of rural areas in the task of the improvement of their material condition.

14 In present day Bengal there are no real village institutions such as are known to have existed in Indian villages from the very earliest days, and which still exist in most other parts of India. It is not therefore to be wondered that the attention of Government has been in recent years drawn forcibly to this grave flaw in the existing administrative machinery of the Province and thoughtful Indians have also realised the supreme importance of reviving village institutions and improving the condition of rural areas in Bengal.

The necessity of reviving village institutions was pointed out in the report of the Police Commission of 1902, and definite recommendations for a scheme of introducing smaller administrative circles within subdivisions were made in Chapter XVIII of their report by the Royal Commission on Decentralisation in 1908. The late Government of Eastern Bengal & Assam laid great stress on the political danger of the Government remaining aloof from the life of the people of the rural areas and the absence of any other agency but the Police and the bailiffs of the Criminal and Civil Courts for influencing the life of the people. The comprehensive scheme of village administration drawn up by the Eastern Bengal and Assam Government has been advocated by the District Administration Committee. This scheme is based on an amalgamation of the village Panchayats created by Act 1870 and the Union Committees of Act 1885, and the granting of some additional Executive and Judicial powers to the village bodies thus created. The Administration Committee made some important recommendations of their own specially with regard to the substitution of Circle Boards in place of the existing Local Board and the granting of larger powers of taxation to Union Committees than what they possess at present.

To give a broad idea of the real significance of the new movement, and to explain its aim and objects, I may be permitted to quote the following passages from my own previous report on the experimental introduction of the Circle System into some subdivisions of Bengal

‘The scheme of village autonomy, which is being attempted to be introduced into Bengal has no exact counterpart in any other province of India. In its origin, its constitution and its aims the scheme has marked distinctive features. In its aims the ‘Circle System’ is far more ambitious than anything which has been attempted in other provinces. The chief object is political and administrative. It seeks to strengthen the administration in spheres where the influence of Government is admittedly weak in Bengal. It also aims at opening up for the people scope for useful work under the guidance of trained officers of Government in fields where honest work is likely to bear the most abundant harvest, and which are now most sadly neglected. The need for more close and intimate relation with the people was being most keenly felt by the Government at the present juncture. The advance of education had at the same time made the people most keenly alive to the want of any organisation or system for improving the health and sanitation of rural areas, large portions of which are in Bengal in a special degree liable to the ravages of malaria and other epidemic diseases. The time was therefore ripe for the introduction of a scheme of administrative reform, which for the want of a better name has been called the ‘Circle System’.

As in its origin and aims so also in its constitution, the scheme is widely different. Instead of having to regulate the duties of paid hereditary village officials and a class of landlords with legal liabilities for law and order, we have in Bengal the task of educating the most willing and qualified residents of rural areas in managing their local affairs and co-operating with Government in maintaining peace and order over the country. The motive power of the whole scheme is the voluntary co-operation of the most educated and influential people of rural areas in the task of

a more efficient administration of their home areas than is the case at present ”

15 But no final orders have yet been passed on the recommendations of the Administration Committee, and the proposed Bill on Village Local Self Government, which is based on the recommendations of the Administration Committee has not yet been passed. Not much progress can be made in introducing the new system of village administration unless the various proposals included in the scheme, specially the new village courts, receive the legislative sanction of Government.

Introduct on
of Circle Sys-
tem in Rang-
pur

The Circle System as far as it had gone was introduced into the district in 1913, but no circle officer was appointed till 1914. In that year an officer was posted to the Sadar sub division and thanas Kotwali and Gangachara were taken up. A second circle officer was appointed for the Sadar sub division in 1915, and a third officer for the Kurigram sub division in 1916. The Circle System has thus been introduced into thanas Gangachara, Kotwali, Pirgacha and Kaunia of the Sadar sub division, and thanas Uthpur and Kurigram of the Kurigram sub division. A complete scheme for the introduction of the Circle System throughout the district was submitted in 1915. It provides for the creation of 9 circles and the appointment of 9 Circle officers for the whole district. Although for reasons stated above it has not been found possible to make much substantial progress with the scheme as a whole, still much useful preliminary work has been done and special officers for supervision are now available.

16 It was therefore decided to go on as far with the Circle System as was possible under the existing orders, and combine with it such other schemes for the improvement of the condition of the people of rural areas which were ready to hand, and about which no fresh legislation or executive orders of Government were necessary. From the scheme of the Circle System the Local Self Government duties of the President Chairman was specially selected as being

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the sphere in which it is possible to find most useful and attractive work for rural areas. As regards the proposed judicial duties of village bodies it was decided, in the absence of legally constituted village courts, to give indirect relief to the raiyats on the following lines. In all cases requiring local enquiry for eliciting the true facts of any criminal case it was decided that reference would be made to the President and other important members of Panchayets, who would also be encouraged to amicably settle as many cases as they can. Under recent orders of the Commissioner lists of specially reliable Panchayets who can be entrusted with such enquiry have been made.

Together with the special schemes embraced in the 'Circle System' it was decided to take up work simultaneously in the following departments :—

- (1) Improvement of agriculture.
- (2) Spread of Co-operative Credit.
- (3) *Development of elementary education in rural areas.*
- (4) Sanitation and Hygiene.
- (5) Village Defence.

The following observations were made in the note "On Village Improvement" in introducing the above scheme into this district in July last.—

"Our hope that the experiment in this district may lead to useful and beneficial results are based on the following grounds :—

- (1) The agricultural and material condition of the district is such that experiments in progressive schemes have a fair chance of success, and in some of the most important spheres a beginning has already been made and the ground cleared for future advance. A rich District Board with a gradually expanding income which has already reached 5 lakhs of rupees is also an important asset in favour of approved schemes being given a trial in this district, because there is no denying the fact that paucity of funds explain to a great extent

the sparseness of any systematic efforts in this direction in the past

- (2) The scheme as prepared for this district makes ample provision for adequate supervision by reliable officers and is thus free from the principal drawback which accounted for the failure of most of these schemes in the past. The following special officers will be engaged in carrying out these measures under the guidance of the Sadar Sub Divisional Officer —

- (a) The Circle Officers
- (b) The District Inspector of Co operation
- (c) The District Board Agricultural Overseer
- (d) The District Board Sanitary Inspector
- (e) The Circle Sub overseer

- (3) The experiment will first be tried in a small area, and two thanas in the Sadar sub division, Gangachara and Pirgachra have been selected for the purpose

- (4) Though the independent measures embraced in the proposed scheme are not new, yet their simultaneous adoption is a new experiment, with a view to permit the cumulative force of these progressive measures to have full play in uplifting the material and moral condition of the agriculturist in India who is lagging so far behind the more advanced sections of the Indian community "

- 17 But unfortunately on account of the abnormal conditions created by the War the experiment could not be systematically carried on and the plan of confining it to a small area only had also to be abandoned

Results obtained

However, as a broad result of the experiments during last year, a more organic connection between the different schemes has been discovered, and it has been found possible to interest local bodies in all schemes for the improvement of the condition of the people to a far greater extent than it was at first imagined to be possible. The Presidents and Chairmen of Unions have taken

great interest in agricultural and educational matters, and there seems to be a clear indication that in our completed scheme of village autonomy it will be necessary to shift still further away the centre of gravity of the 'Circle System' from the village Chaukidari scheme than is contemplated even in the report of the Administration Committee. Some important practical difficulties have also been successfully overcome. Amongst these the possibility of finding adequate remuneration for the Union Munshi without any assistance from Government, and a workable plan for raising a suitable contribution from the people of the Union for the improvement and maintenance of local institutions of all kinds have the most practical value and will be referred to in their proper places.

The result of the experiments also shows that there cannot be doubt that even in an educationally backward district like Rangpur, it is possible in most areas to get as our Panchayets men who under suitable guidance are capable of doing much useful work for their villages and who will take interest in the discharge of their honorary duties.

Some of our President Panchayets are rich zamindars of considerable influence and position in society, like Babu Manindra Chandra Rai Choudhury of Kundi, Moulvi Abdul Aziz Choudhury of Mohipur and Babu Ambica Mohan Rai Choudhury of Tepa and most of the others are jotedars and men of position and substance. There has been no appreciable friction with the police and no cases have come to light when any President Panchayet had to be censured or punished for improper conduct. On the contrary the Hon'ble Nawab Shmsul Huda, late member of Executive Council, who visited some Unions in the district was greatly impressed with the awakening interest in public matters such as village education, Co-operative Credit, agricultural experiments etc. which the people in distant villages evinced. The Commissioner of the division, Mr. Samman, also expressed gratification at the signs of new life which was in evidence in the Unions which he visited. Already the growth of a spirit of emulation is visible

amongst the most respectable villagers for a place on the Village Committee which not only finds healthy occupation for his otherwise empty days but also secures for him a position of some honour and dignity in the village polity

While insisting on the careful and constant supervision of the work of the President Panchayets by Circle Officers and Sub Divisional Officers every opportunity was taken to reward and encourage good work amongst them and in annual gathering of President Panchayets and Chairmen of Union Committees was organised every year since 1913 when the Commissioner of the division gave away valuable watches and rings and certificates of merit to the most deserving men Since the beginning of this practice 109 panchayets have been rewarded 24 watches 7 rings and 78 certificates of merit have been given

18 We may now pass to the work of the District Board which will however, come under review in connection with the special departments for which its funds have been expended during the last few years The District Board of Rangpur is one of the richest in Bengal and its average annual income during the last three years including the subvention of Public Works cess amounted to Rs 4 20 624/ The decision of the Government in 1912-13 to augment the resources of District Board by the subvention of grant equal to the road cess of the district opened a new area in the history of the Board and put it on a footing of such financial stability as to enable it to undertake large schemes which it was unable to touch before It is note worthy that from the very first year of this additional grant the Board set apart a substantial portion of the grant for the encouragement of Union Committees and the improvement of water supply and sanitation of rural areas and thus anticipated the subsequent orders of Government which have issued on this subject The total grant of rural committees during these years has amounted to Rs 61 381/ The grant to Local Boards was also substantially increased The average annual grant for each Local Board for the last 4 years has been Rs 8 000/ against Rs 2 000/

the average for the preceding 4 years. As regards the departments under its direct control, the District Board, in the sphere of Public Works, spent over 3 lakhs of rupees on an average during the last few years. Particular attention was directed to the erection of suitable Inspection Bungalows for the convenience of touring officers and to the repair of numerous bridges which were seriously damaged during the great earthquake of 1897. Money was freely spent in meeting the ever increasing educational demands of the district and helping educational institutions both with recurrent and capital building grants. Thus the educational expenditure of the District Board during the last 3 years averaged Rs 1,54,409/- and was proportionately heavier than of other District Boards. Much progress was also made in providing medical relief to the inhabitants of the district and there was marked improvement both in the equipment and the number of Board's Dispensaries. While the medical expenses of the Board rose from Rs 21,166/- in 1912-13 to Rs 41,948/- in 1916-17, agriculture, industry and higher education all received due attention from the District Board.

After reviewing the work of the District Board in all its different departments during the last three years the Chairman made the following observations on the occasion of the opening of the new District Board office building in October last year by the Hon'ble Sir Shamsul Huda —

"I have now taken you through a wearisome maze of details concerning the working of the District Board during recent years. But I trust that the information which I have tried to impart has not altogether been without interest, for these dry figures present the life history of those institutions and agencies which make for the happiness and the intellectual and material progress of inhabitants of the whole district. There is no branch of the administration of the district which, in my humble opinion, is of greater importance and is so directly connected with the forces for good which are at work in the district and which affords such a wide field for all classes of community, official and non-official, to work whole-

heartedly together for the common good of the place which is our home at least for the time we live in it. And I take this opportunity of once more acknowledging, as I have already done so very often in my official reports, the able and generous support which I have received from most of the members of the District Board and from the official and non-official office-bearers of the District and Local Boards in carrying on the administration of the Board. My acknowledgments are specially due to Rai Mrityunjoy Rai Choudhury Bahadur who in his capacity of the Vice-Chairman of the District Board has rendered most valuable services during the whole period of my connection with the Board."

CHAPTER III

PROGRESS OF RURAL SELF GOVERNMENT AND CREATION OF UNION COMMITTEES

19. The municipal functions of the village panchayets form their most attractive and important duties. Great stress has, therefore, been rightly placed on this sphere of work of the local bodies both in the Eastern Bengal Assam scheme and the report of the Administration Committee. If the foundation of the Circle System is to be the willing co-operation of the most advanced and public spirited people of the villages comprised in each union it is clear that in no other sphere will they co-operate so wholeheartedly and willingly as in the improvement of their own villages. All authorities are agreed that any advance in Bengal in the organisation of village autonomy must proceed on the amalgamation of the Choukidari Panchayets of Act 1870 and the Union Committees of Act 1885 as amended by Act 1889 the only two forms of village institutions recognized by law which exist in Bengal. As observed by the Administration Committee these combined Union Panchayets exercising not only municipal but also Police and executive functions should be the foundation of the whole system of Local Self Government.

20. The same principle has been adopted for this district. The organization of the Choukidari Unions throughout the district was completed in 1913. The whole district was divided into 559 Unions giving an average 9 sq miles and a population 6,614 of souls for each Union. The next step was the appointment of suitable Panchayets. For this work a great deal of trouble has

Importance
of Municipal
functions of
local bodies

Plan of ac-
tion and pro-
gress in this
district

been taken in this district and every Union was personally visited by the Sub Divisional Officer or his Circle Officer for making a proper selection of the men on whom the success of the whole scheme of village administration depends. The next step was the creation of rural Committees for Municipal duties of the Unions concerned. The subvention of the Public Works Department grant amounting to 2 lakh and half annually to the District Board enabled that body to take up the question of rural Self Government in the district. It was decided to select a few important villages and markets throughout the district and constitute informal rural Committees at these places. Then these bodies were entrusted to carry on definite programmes of work. A grant was made from the District Board for the purpose and the informal committees were expected to supplement the District Board grant by raising local subscriptions and to carry on their programme for the year from this combined fund. If the people shewed interest in these duties if suitable men were available for taking up these honorary duties if practical proof of the interest of the people in their local affairs was given by the payment of voluntary subscriptions and if the programme of work of the informal Committees was satisfactorily carried out then a recommendation was made for the formal recognition of the Committee as a Union Committee under the Local Self Government Act. A beginning was made in 1913-14 and four important centres of business were selected in each of the four sub divisions of the district where need for improvement of sanitation and communications was greater and where there was more chance of getting suitable men to fill the posts of Panchayets. The places selected were —

Sadar — Badaiganj Sadmapushkarini Gopalpur Bhotemari

Gaibandla — Govindaganj Haripur Mohimaganj

Kurigram — Kurigram Chilmari Ulipur Bhatiband

Nilphamari — Nilphamari Dumla Domar Kishoreganj

Informal Committees were appointed at these places the jurisdiction of the Unions was made coterminous with the Choukidari Union of those places and the same body of men

were made office-bearers of both Unions. A grant of Rs. 1,300/- was made to each Union from the District Board. During the year 1913-14 these 16 informal Committees spent Rs. 7,061/-. Out of the 16 informal Committees thus started 15 were constituted into Union Committees in 1915 under the Act. There was a technical difficulty in the case of the Bhitarkand Union Committee in the Kurigram sub-division and it was not till February 1917 that formal sanction was obtained for the creation of this Union Committee. During 1915-16, as stated above, the 15 Committees which had been started in the year 1913-14 received formal sanction. During the same year 17 more informal Committees were created at the following places:—

Sadar—Haridebpur, Maminpur, Uttam, Pushuram, Rajendrapur, Chandanpat, Betgari, Khalaya, Barabil, Kholkanda, Lakshitari, Gangachara, Gajaghanta, Haragach.

Gaibandha—Naldanga.

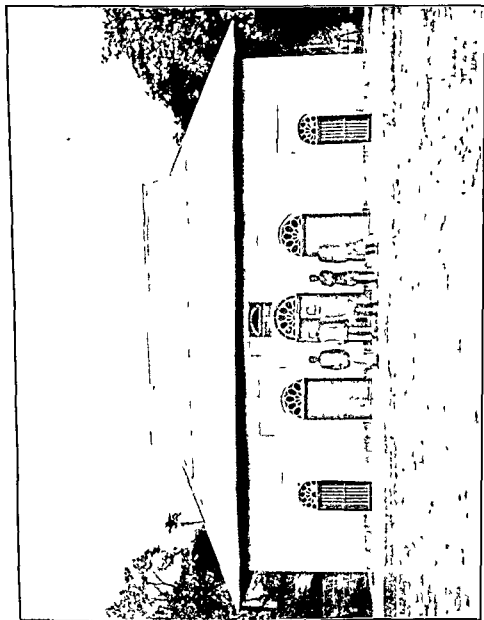
Nilphamari—Naotara, Khalishachapani.

Thus altogether there were 18 informal and 15 legally constituted Committees working during 1915-16. A sum of Rs. 22,000/- was spent by the Union Committees during the year, out of which a sum of Rs. 5,000/- was raised by private subscription. The District Board grant for each Union during this year was Rs. 500/-. During the following year 1916-17 the number of legally constituted Unions was 16 but the number of informal Committees increased to 54. The District Board grant to each Union had to be still further reduced to Rs. 300/- only per Union during this year. A total sum of Rs. 25,680/- was spent by the Union Committees, out of which Rs. 7,295/- represented local subscriptions paid by the people themselves. Out of the 54 informal Committees of previous years 32 received formal sanction in April 1917; thus there were 18 formally constituted Union Committees and 22 informal Committees in 1917. But during the same year 22 more informal Committees have been created. Thus during the present year there are altogether 92 rural Committees, out of which 18 are formally

constituted, Union Committees and the remaining 11 are informal Committees. Applications for the formal recognition of 31 societies have already been submitted and applications regarding the remaining 10 will follow. A halt however will now be made, till some more Circle Officers are appointed to this district. Although there are quite a large number of other villages in the district where rural Committees may be usefully started and although the District Board is also in a position to finance all Union Committees even if they were constructed throughout the district, yet it was considered desirable to make advance gradually in this important sphere of rural administration, and to provide for adequate supervision by responsible officers and thus guard against chances of failure and disappointment. The following table shows the work of the Union Committees during the last three years —

	No of formal Union Committees	No of informal Union Committees	District Board grant	Local contribution	Mileage of Roads constructed	No of Wells excavated	Bridges and other works
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1914-15	—	16	23441	nil	62	16	2 Bridges and 3 latrines
1915-16	15	18	16901	5000	92	20	5 Bridges and 2 latrines
1916-17	16	54	18385	7295	120	42	12 Bridges and 2 dianas and 1 latrine.

In think it may be safely asserted that in this district a most



SADYAPUSKARIN UNION OFFICE

hopeful beginning has been made in this department of rural administration. Before 1913 there was no local organization in any part of this district for carrying on works of local utility by the people of the localities concerned. To-day 19 legally constituted Union Committees and 11 informal rural Committees are carrying on this work in different parts of this district under the guidance and supervision of the Sub Divisional Officers and Circle Officers. During this period a sum of Rs 12,295/ has been contributed by the people themselves and the average of local contribution for the last three years has been Rs 1,000/ and odd. How satisfactory this result is will be realised when we remember that for the whole of Bengal local contributions amounted to Rs 3 685/ only in 1912-13 a depressing fact to which reference has been made in Para 100 of the report of the District Administration Committee. During the short time that the Committee have been at work 27½ miles of village roads, 19 bridges and 78 wells have been constructed by them.

The change in the look of the places where Union Committees have been in existence is already very marked. There is not the least shadow of doubt that at the present rate the Union Committees will play a most important part in changing the environments of the daily life of the peasant. The impression made on the minds of Inspecting Officers is already noted before has been most satisfactory. The following few extracts from Commissioner's Inspection remarks will bear out what I have said above —

- (1) Extract from the Inspection notes made by the Divisional Commissioner during his visit to the Sadmapushkarini President Panchayet's office on 20.2.17

"The Chairman has placed a splendid office at the disposal of the Committee, it would do excellently for a court room. It is well furnished with a nice almirah for the books and other records.

I am very pleased with what I have seen in the office and also in the Union itself. The Chairman is doing excellent work.

and I congratulate him and the members and thank them for what they are doing "

(2) Extract from Inspection notes made by the Divisional Commissioner during his visit to the Gopalpur President Panchayet's office on the 20-2-17

"I visited the Gopalpur Union this morning with the District Magistrate, Sub Divisional Officer and Circle Officer I went along the Gopalpur Bouchandi road up to the new bridge No 1 It is very serviceable bridge and quite suitable for a road of this sort

I looked at the registers which have been intelligently written Good use is being made of the fund at the disposal of the Committee A programme of works has already been drawn up for next year on the basis of receipt of Rs 500/ from local taxes and Rs 300/ from the District Board Taxation will be introduced next year for, the first time The Chairman Panchayet is taking great interest in the work I wish him and the Committee every success "

(3) Extract from Inspection notes made by the Divisional Commissioner on the Gajghanta President Panchayet's office on 16 2 17

"I visited the Union Committee's Office this morning with the District Magistrate, and Sub Divisional Officer The books are very neatly kept The report book is quite interesting The money available this year has nearly all been spent and very profitably spent I went to see the well at Habu and was very well pleased with it The water appears to be of very good quality, it is greatly appreciated by the villagers

Babu Ishan Chandra Choudhury the President Panchayet and Chairman of the Union Committee takes a very intelligent interest in the work He is to be congratulated in the good effort that has been made

The Circle Officer keeps well in touch with the work, paying frequent visits to Gajghanta "

(4) Extract from the Inspection notes made by the

Divisional Commissioner during his visit to the Pirgacha President Panchayet's office on 22-2-17.

"I paid a visit to Pirgacha this morning with the District Magistrate, the Sub-Divisional Officer, and Circle Officer. I was glad to find the Committee has started work on an informal basis and has already done well. Two and half miles of the road from Pirgacha to Jhinia have been constructed this year."

21. Reverting to details of work and the appointment of office-bearers of the new combined Unions, it may be pointed out that up to now the President and members have been appointed by the Sub-Divisional Officer with the approval of the District Magistrate. But under the recent orders of the Government these men will have to be elected. The elections will be held under the eyes of Sub-Divisional Officer to prevent the election of undesirable *decanias* and village touts. As stated before, up to now, we have been most fortunate in our Presidents and the majority of them are men of integrity, influence, and wealth. Each Union has also its Munshi, who receives an uniform rate of pay of Rs 10/- per month. Of this Rs. 6/- comes from the Choukidari Fund, and Rs. 4/- from the Union Fund as provided for under section 57 (2) of the Local Self-Government Act. This is a happy solution of a difficulty, as it will no longer be necessary for Government to make any contribution for the pay of the Munshi. As the Union Munshi is also being trained in agricultural work at the Government Farms and is going to do the work of the Agricultural Demonstrator in Unions where there are no separate Demonstrators he will receive a bonus or reward at the end of the year for the agricultural work he might do. We are also very lucky in getting on the average a very suitable type of men for our Munshi. Most of them are able to ride a bike or a horse, they are literate and fairly smart men. Preference is always given to a local man with some land of his own, if possible. Then we have the Circle Sub-Inspector. There are two attached to the Circle Officers of the Sadar sub-division and one each for the other three sub-divisions.

Programme of each year's work is settled by the President and Panchayets in consultation with the Circle Officer. The Circle Sub-Overseer helps to prepare the plans and estimates which are checked and passed by the District Engineer. As the number of Unions is rapidly increasing it is daily getting more difficult to pass the programme of work of all the Unions. The District Engineer will, therefore, be relieved of the duty as the Act does not require such close scrutiny. The plans and estimates will be passed by the Sub-Divisional Officer who will be empowered to consult District Engineer when he likes.

Experience has guided us to what seems to be a very satisfactory solution of another difficult problem. This refers to the raising of funds by taxation under section 118 C, of the Act. As already noted hitherto funds are being raised from the people of the Union by voluntary subscriptions. But this gives a good deal of trouble to the Panchayets and some amount of inequality of treatment. It has, therefore, been decided that in Union Committees formally constituted under the Act subscriptions will be abandoned in favour of taxation imposed on the basis of the Choukidari assessment list. At a conference of Presidents and the people of some of the Unions it was decided that half of the Choukidari tax should ordinarily be paid by each house-holder as a tax under section 118 C of the Local Self-Government Act. As the poorer house-holders have been excluded entirely in this district from the assessment list this arrangement will not cause any hardship on the poorer people. When the sum thus raised will not be sufficient for the requirements of the Union, the richer people of the Union will be taxed up to the maximum of Rs. 5/- per monsem as fixed by the Local Self-Government Act. On an average the Choukidari tax of each Union of the district amounts to Rs. 1,200/-, the tax to be raised under section 118 C will, therefore, be Rs. 600/- for each Union on an average. This together with the District Board grant of Rs. 300/- will bring up the Union Fund to Rs. 900/-. The grant of Rs. 300/- from the District Board will include the income from the pounds within the Union. When

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the people from the Union pay this additional tax for Union works they will not be required to pay any other regular subscriptions either for their local dispensaries or for any other purpose. The income of Union Funds will be disbursed under the following heads —

- 1 Pay of Union Munshi
- 2 Communication etc , bridges
- 3 Contribution to the local dispensary
- 4 Water supply
- 5 Sanitation, jungle clearing, drainage
- 6 Contribution to local schools
- 7 Stationery and miscellaneous

Of course under the Act taxation under section 118 C, can only be raised for definite objects. Some of the above objects are not covered by that section. But the difficulty will be obviated by spending the contribution of the District Board on such objects which don't fall under section 118 C of the Act. It is hoped however that very soon there will be legislation enhancing the self taxing powers of Union Committees, a point to which reference is made later on. In the meanwhile the people of this district have accepted the above procedure as a happy solution, because it makes taxation for Local Self Government uniform all over the district and the scale becomes known to everybody.

The programme for each year has to be fixed according to the budget indicated above, but the Circle Officer with the approval of the Sub-Divisional Officer may deviate from the budget in case of any special requirements of any Union.

A separate schedule of roads of each Union has been prepared. This schedule includes all village paths and roads in the Union, whether taken up by Union Committee or not. This schedule has been prepared in the vernacular and will be maintained in the office of the President and will be revised every five years. A map of each Union on a scale of 4 inches to the mile is being prepared, and all roads, inspection bungalows, schools

etc., are being marked on this map. The following registers are being maintained —

- (1) Proceeding Book
- (2) Register of Choukidars
- (3) Register of Villages constituting the Unions
- (4) Inspection Book
- (5) Receipt Register
- (6) Information Book
- (7) Issue Register
- (8) Process Service Note Book
- (9) Cash Book
- (10) Register of Works carried out by Union Committees
- (11) Education Register
- (12) Agricultural Ledger
- (13) Miscellaneous Register
- (14) Parade Register

Most Unions have quite suitable Union offices where all the Registers are kept and where the fortnightly Choukidari parade is held by the President. Up to now, Choukidari parades are held only fortnightly and no friction has yet been brought to notice between the Presidents and the Police regarding the control of the choukidars.

22 Special rules regarding collections and the keeping of accounts have been adopted. The cash book and accounts of the Union Fund are to be kept entirely separate from the accounts of the Choukidari Fund. There is a separate assessment list for the Union Fund and receipts are being separately granted as required by the Act.

After consulting other District Boards regarding the procedure which is being followed by them regarding accounts of Union Committees the following procedure has been adopted for the District —

- (i) The plans and estimates &c., are to be prepared by the Union Committee Sub Overseers according to the District Board schedule rates. The Sub Overseers

may, when occasion arises, come to the District Engineer for necessary instructions

- (ii) The plans and estimates are to be passed in the Union Committee meetings and countersigned by the Circle Officers or the Sub Divisional Officers after due examination
- (iii) Important original works may be supervised occasionally by the District Engineer
- (iv) Plans and estimates of original works (whose estimates will amount to more than Rs 500/-) and bills for the same should be checked in the District Engineer's Office
- (v) All bills are to be prepared by the Sub Overseer, countersigned by the Circle Officers or Sub Divisional Officers and then passed by the Chairman of the Union Committees
- (vi) The works are to be supervised and the measurements of the works are to be checked by the Circle Officers or the Sub Divisional Officers or the Chairman of the Union Committees. District Engineer may occasionally supervise and check these. But at least 5 % of these works should be checked by him
- (vii) The Public Works expenditure of the Union Committees will not be included in the District Engineer's work abstract and register of works
- (viii) The District Board Accountant will see that the charges are covered by allotments, that the bills are passed by the Chairman of the Union Committees and are properly receipted and that the accounts are correct for audit purposes
- (ix) Programme of works to be submitted by the Sub Divisional Officers before April for sanction of the Board, before undertaking the works

23 It is understood that to enable local bodies to exercise real powers of self government, an enactment entitled "Bengal

Village Self-Government Bill" is about to be passed into law. Advance in local self-government in rural areas is bound to be much more rapid after the bill is passed. I would however venture in this connection to repeat a suggestion which I have made before "It is very important to provide for additional powers of self-taxation by Village Committees beyond those conferred on them by the provisions of section 1180, of the Local Self-Government Act. The provision of section 1180, imposing the conditions under which the powers of taxation can be exercised should be considerably widened and power should be taken for taxation for such important objects relating to the welfare of the Union as education, medical relief etc, which are at present not covered by that section, 1180. It may be true that the question of additional taxation may raise some amount of opposition but it is quite certain that the proposed Village Committees will be greatly handicapped in their efforts to do good without more extended and unfettered powers of raising funds from the villages under their control."

CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESS OF AGRICULTURE.

24. It is a truism that the improvement of agriculture is likely to benefit the people of rural areas of this district, 95 per cent. of whom are agriculturists, more than any other remedial measure which might be adopted. It has already been noted that agriculture is the only form of productive industry that there is in the district, and agriculture feeds all the avenues of wealth and prosperity even in the non-agricultural towns of the district. The subject of agriculture is, therefore, one of the most important departments of administration, and fortunately in Rangpur it has received its due share of attention. *The results of experiments already made in this district are also singularly encouraging, and its agricultural resources present a very wide scope for useful work. In dealing with the subject we shall first give a brief account of the agricultural resources of the district, then indicate the lines of possible improvement, next describe the progress made within recent years and the means and methods employed, and lastly outline future work and progress.*

25. Agriculturally Rangpur is perhaps the most important district in Bengal. Its total cropped area is 18,39,903 acres and it stands third in the proportion of its cropped area to the total area of the district. Next to Mymensingh it has the largest normal jute area. It is well-known for its tobacco of which it has the largest area of any district in India, being nearly equal to that of the whole of the tobacco-area of the rest of Bengal. Rangpur is also

Agricultural
resources &
physical con-
ditions

one of the heaviest potato growing districts. The ginger and aroidae of the Rangpur are also well known all over Bengal. The value of annual agricultural wealth of the district from its main crops are approximately as follows —

Crop	Normal sown area	Approximate value
Paddy	11,04,800 acres	Rs. 2,82,35,000
Sugarcane	20,500	, 23,60,000
Jute	3,03,000	1,68,00,000
Tobacco	1,04,100 „	1,59,00,000

Rangpur is a vast alluvial plain without any distinct undulations. The whole district is watered by several large rivers and throughout the district the nature of the soil and the undulating contour of the country give unmistakable evidence of river action. A strip of red clay along the west border of the district containing *lanikars* are evidently the deposits of an ancient calcareous river from the west of the Himalayas. The soil as indicated above is mainly a sandy loam and is very retentive of moisture. Good winter crops are obtained without any irrigation. The alluvial origin of the soil, the annual addition of salt from inundations and the usually copious and regular rainfall are some of the causes of the remarkable fertility of the soil of Rangpur. The *pali* (alluvial) soil possesses great recuperative power and is not easily exhausted. The methods of agriculture pursued however are primitive. The cattle are very poor and the plough does not go below 4 inches. Very little manure is applied and with the exception of an occasional plot of tobacco no crops are irrigated. The comparatively well to do condition of the agricultural population has only been possible because of the favourable natural conditions described above. But these very circumstances make it imperative on us to make greater efforts if we want to take full advantage of the gifts of nature. With a slightly greater effort on the part of the agriculturists the district of Rangpur could be made to yield much heavier and more valuable crops than it does now.

26. If we wish to increase the sum total and value of the agricultural produce of the district we must give attention to the following points. We must first of all

The path of
agricultural
progress

increase the agricultural knowledge of the raiyat, which will mean that his general knowledge, his mental outlook and ability to look ahead into the future will also have to be improved. It is because the Indian raiyat has not this mental outlook, this foresight, the habit to save and make provision for a rainy day, that inspite of the fact that his lands are fertile, that he possesses hereditary knowledge of the art of husbandry of no mean order, that he is still so poor and steeped in debt. Equally important is the question of the economic conditions under which agricultural credit is available to the cultivators. But these are aspects of the question which, however, important in regulating the ultimate economic condition of the Indian agriculturist, are not germane to the topic of agriculture in itself, and they will be considered in later sections of the pamphlet. The measures for increasing the fertility of the soil, the selection of the most suitable and productive seeds, the use of the most labour-saving implements and appliances of agriculture and the adoption of such precautions as are necessary to save crops from diseases and blights and allied subjects, need only be discussed here. Fortunately in this district the question of irrigation and the maintenance of water reservoirs for purposes of irrigation are of very small importance, thanks to the abundant rainfall and the natural dampness of the soil. In fact for this district the following are the main points which are of practical importance in connection with the question of improvement of agriculture.—

- (1) The selection and distribution of improved seeds.
- (2) Manures and implements.
- (3) Introduction of special crops, *e. g.*, Cigar-tobacco and Hill potatoes.
- (4) Improvement of cattle.
- (5) Introduction of co-operative methods in Agriculture.
- (6) Agricultural education.

There is no other reform in the whole field of agriculture which is more readily appreciated by the raiyats, which yields more valuable direct and immediate results, and the adoption of which entails so little expense as the adoption of selected seed. By the simple substitution of improved and more suitable seeds, other things remaining equal, there will be a very marked and substantial increase in the produce of the cultivator and therefore of his income, a point to which reference will be made later on in the section. As regards distribution of seed points which want attention are —

(a) The storage and distribution of seed

(b) Precautions to be taken for the proper cultivation of these seeds

As regards (a) it is of the utmost importance to have local depots for seeds, implements etc at a comparatively easy distance from the houses of the agriculturists, and to make arrangements to get the seed in the depots in good time before they would be actually required for sowing by cultivators. Failures in experiments with improved seeds are attributable chiefly to the lateness in sowing the seeds, due to delay in receiving seeds at the spots where they are wanted. It is therefore desirable to construct "seed stores" in different parts of the country.

With reference to (b), one of the most important points to keep in mind is that these seeds must not be lost sight of. The growing crops must be inspected to ensure that no deterioration has taken place through crossing and careless handling of the seed. It is an important point which should be impressed upon the cultivator and he should be taught to go to his fields and weed out stray stalks of other varieties which may have got into his crop.

In connection with the improvement of agriculture attention must be paid to the improvement of cattle of the raiyats on which much of the agricultural success of the raiyats depends.

Lastly in the programme of agricultural reform the question of agricultural education for the sons of agriculturists has always occupied a prominent place. A subject which is of more imme-

date importance is the imparting of practical instruction to the agriculturists about the best means of fighting insect pests and blights and diseases of crops generally

The available agencies for agricultural improvement

27. The agencies which are available for agricultural work in the district are the following —

- (1) Department of Agriculture
- (2) The Rangpur District Agricultural Association
- (3) The officers of the General Department
- (4) The District Board
- (5) The Village Union Panchayets created by the Circle System and the Circle Officers
- (6) Special officers appointed by Zamindars

28 This district has received more than an average share of the attention of the Agricultural Department. It has the unique distinction of having three Government Farms for three different objects

(a) *The Demonstration Farm*

The oldest is the Demonstration Farm—the property of the Agricultural Association. This farm is only 20 acres in area and is situated within the town, close to the Collector's Office and other public institutions. The soil is a rich moist loam, the larger part of the farm being only fit for paddy. The farm was originally started with the idea of experimenting with tobacco. It was soon found, however, that the soil was not typical of the tobacco growing tract of the district and a separate tobacco farm was established at Barirhat in 1907. The Demonstration Farm has since been used for testing new seeds and methods of cultivation and as a seed farm. During the last few years attention is being mainly concentrated on the production of improved seeds and the testing of new seeds. The introduction of hill potatoes, green manuring, Gandari sugarcane and improved jute and paddy seed has been due mainly to the work done at this station. Although the farm belongs to the Agricultural Association, it has with the exception of a short

interval, been under the management of the Department of Agriculture.

(b) *Burirhat Farm.*

This farm was started in 1907 with the sole object of carrying out experiments with tobacco which is a very important and special crop of the district. The farm is situated on the borders of the tobacco-growing tract, 5 miles north of the Rangpur town. It is 52 acres in area. The soil is a sandy loam, deficient in lime. Various experiments with exotic varieties of tobacco are being conducted both for cigar and cigarette making. The country varieties were found unsuitable for either of these purposes. The experiments in producing cigarette tobacco were ultimately given up as the market for high grades cigarette tobacco was found to be strictly limited. The experiment in producing good cigar leaves have, however, given excellent results, and the leaves produced have found a good market in Madras and are selling at Rs. 40/- to Rs 100/- per maund, the country tobacco selling at Rs. 10/- to Rs 25/- per maund only. With a view to make an improvement of the local tobacco, a survey of this district was made two years ago by the Farm Superintendent. Seeds of several varieties were collected from this district as well as from several other districts in the province. If any tobacco plot of a cultivator be examined, different varieties are found mixed up. Among them one variety may be a better yielder than the rest. Unfortunately a large percentage of the tobacco now grown comprise mostly of inferior types. For the last two years we have been growing about 10 varieties and trying to improve them by selection; we shall then distribute the seeds, so that the better varieties may be grown in preference to the others.

It has now been decided to make this place also a centre for demonstration work and a seed depot has been erected near the Farm. A few Co-operative Societies have also been started, for improving agriculture. Attempt is also being made to make demonstrations through the President Panchayets. These will be described in a subsequent paragraph.

(c) *Dairy Farm.*

The Dairy Farm was established in 1913, with the object of improving the cattle of the province. There has been some difference of opinion as to how this object can be best achieved, and the Farm has somewhat suffered for lack of definite and continued policy. It has, however, been recently decided that the improvement to be effected will be both by selection from pure Bengal cows and by crossing Bengal cows with Punjab bulls. The bulk of the area is to be devoted to the growing of fodder crops. The work done upto date has been mainly of a preliminary nature, such as construction of sheds and buildings, reclamation by bringing the area under cultivation etc. Cows from most of the Eastern and Northern Bengal districts were collected and tested on this farm and the most suitable type has now been selected. Several fodder crops have also been tested. It will, therefore, now be possible to carry on the work along the lines indicated above.

The object of the Government Farms is mainly to experiment and recommend improved seeds and methods. The Farms can do very little good directly in the way of spreading the knowledge of the improvements among the agriculturists. As a rule the cultivators will not come to these Farms, and even when they do come they will not be convinced of the superiority of our methods by simply looking at the improved crops grown at the Farms, or even by demonstration of better methods carried on in the Farm with more suitable machinery. It is necessary to demonstrate these improvements in the raiyats' own village under conditions with which he is familiar and in which he actually works. And once a few raiyats make money by adopting our methods there is no further difficulty in introducing that particular improvement in that area. The task before us for the last few years has been to devise means by which, firstly the agriculturists will be persuaded to come to our Farms and take interest in what is going on in these Farms and secondly to organise a campaign

of demonstration work in suitable areas with the ultimate object of spreading it all over the district

29 Rangpur is fortunate in having a specially keen and active Agricultural Association which has been a most useful ally of the Agricultural Department from the commencement of its career. The Rangpur District Agricultural Association was established in 1904 and was reorganised in 1912 when it became a registered corporate body. To start with the Association was carrying out experiments on the Demonstration Farm. Since 1913 however, arrangements have been made for systematic demonstration work. The work has been carried out under the instruction of the Officers of the Department of Agriculture. The Governing Body consists of 21 members with the District Magistrate as President Babu Asutosh Lahiri as Vice President and Mr J N Chakraverty and Babu Asutosh Mazumdar as Secretaries. There are 102 members and the rate of annual subscription is Rs 5/ and the Association has at its credit a sum of Rs 1000/. This sum has been saved from funds derived from the subscriptions and donations from the members supplemented by occasional grants from the District Board and the interest from the money deposited in Banks and Co operative Societies. The income is spent mainly in purchasing seeds manures and implements etc which are supplied at cost price to the cultivators in giving rewards to cultivators for successful demonstration in publishing suitable leaflets and for similar purposes.

30 But even with the assistance of the Agricultural Association it was not possible for the Agricultural Department to come into close touch with the people, or to undertake demonstration work on any large scale over any appreciable portion of the district.

The entire agricultural staff of the district available for demonstration work consists of one Superintendent who is also in charge of Dairy Farm one District Agricultural Officer and three Demonstrators. Our object has therefore been to

The District
Agricultural
Association

Plan for
popularising
Agricultural
work in
rural areas

supplement the resources of the Agricultural Department by putting them in close touch with the officers of the General Department, the District Board, the Circle Officers and Village Panchayets, in fact all the agencies which are available for improving the condition of the rural population. The first step was to bring about a closer co-operation and co-ordination between the officers of the General Department and the officers of the Agricultural Department. The Sub-Divisional Officers and the Circle officers were persuaded to look upon the improvement of agriculture as one of their most important duties, and the officers of the Agricultural Department to realise that they can hope to achieve the best results by acting in close co-operation with the officers of the General Department. During the last four years four important Agricultural Conferences have been held, at three of which, the Director of Agriculture was present and at the last Mr. MacKenna, the Agricultural Advisor to the Government of India was also present. The agricultural programme of the district and sub-divisions have been discussed and settled in conferences at which both the District and Sub-Divisional Officers and the Agricultural Officers were present; and most fruitful work of the department has been done in camp when the District Officer or the Sub-Divisional Officer and the Agricultural Officers have been out and have worked together.

The next step was to create a sufficiently large and cheap local staff to help the limited number of officers of the Department to carry on agricultural work amongst the mass of the people. An important advance was made in this direction when it was decided to take advantage of the introduction of the "Circle System" into the district to push on agricultural reforms amongst the people of rural areas through the agency of village organisations and the special supervising officers created by the "Circle System." A few thanas were selected where the work of seed distribution was to be carried out almost entirely through the President Panchayets and the Village Munshis. The Munshis were to receive a short course of practical training in one of the Agricultural Farms, and were to do the work of Demonstrators. Work in accordance

with the above scheme was started at three thanas in 1916 and 14 Munshis received training. It is proposed to give them a bonus on the year's work, on the amounts of seeds etc. distributed through them. A special 'Agricultural Overseer' was appointed by the District Board to supervise the work in this area, as it was clear that during the first few years the Panchayets would need close supervision. Although the scheme has been at work only for about a year, excellent results have already been achieved. This scheme will be further extended as the Circle System is introduced over the district. Since the last two years the District Board has also played an important part in helping forward the progress of agriculture in the district in various other ways. An Agricultural Overseer in addition to three Demonstrators have been appointed by the Board, and substantial grants have also been made for the construction of Seed Stores and for agricultural education. During the present year another important advance was made by enlisting the sympathy and co-operation of liberal minded zamindars in introducing improved methods of agriculture amongst their raiyats. The Maharaja of Cossimbazar, the Raja of Tajhat, Rai Bahadur Annada Mohan Rai Choudhuri have each appointed a Demonstrator for work in their respective zamindaries. A small portion of the property of Roys of Cossimbazar is under the Court of Wards in this district and on an average a thousand rupees are spent each year in agricultural demonstration work, by the Court of Wards. The co-operative movement is also being brought under requisition to help agricultural progress, but our efforts in this direction are still in their infancy but some developments in this line may confidently be expected in the near future.

The plan of work outlined for this district has received the confirmation of the Director of Agriculture, and the first resolution of the Conference held on 7th August last year at which both Mr. Milligan, the Director of Agriculture and Mr. MacKenna, Agricultural Advisor to the Government of India were present, runs as follows :—

"The progress of agricultural work in Rangpur as outlined in the Scheme for Village Improvement in the Rangpur district drawn up by the Collector was discussed. The plan of work as laid down in the scheme was generally approved. The Conference are strongly of opinion that in order to ensure the systematic extension of the work of the Agricultural Department amongst the rural population of a district it is essential to secure the active co-operation of local bodies like Agricultural Associations, District Boards and recognized village organizations like Union Committees and their Panchayets, as has been recommended in the scheme. It will also be most desirable to provide for the co-operation of the officers of the General Administrative Department like Sub-Divisional Officers and Circle Officers for agricultural work as outlined in the scheme."

31. Another important means which is being adopted for introducing improved agricultural methods among cultivators is to encourage the most successful among them by distributing prizes for successful demonstration of improved methods. The first meeting for this purpose was held at the Rangpur Dairy Farm on the 25th January, 1915. The meeting was presided over by the Divisional Commissioner who gave away the prizes. It was attended by the Director of Agriculture, the District Magistrate, the District Judge, all leading officials, and zamindars of the town as well as by a large number of cultivators from the town and from the interior. During the Conference 16 prizes were awarded. The second meeting was held on the 17th February, 1917 under the presidency of the Divisional Commissioner. On this occasion 25 prizes were awarded. The prizes given were mostly improved implements, seeds etc. recommended by the Department. Charts were exhibited showing graphically the results of the experiments carried out by the Department and an exhibition of the produce of the best cultivators was arranged. Short notes of the work done during the year were read by the Superintendent of Agriculture, and short

Annual
gathering of
successful
agricultur-
ists

addresses were given by the Commissioner, District Magistrate, and the Director of Agriculture

The object for which these meetings were started has been amply justified. They have created a healthy rivalry amongst the cultivators in producing better crops and taking more care of their cultivation. It is proposed that in future these meetings will be converted into small exhibitions lasting over 2 or 3 days, so that the cultivators might go round the Farms more carefully and see the work that is actually being done. It is also proposed to hold the annual gathering of Panchayets and Co operators at the same time as the agricultural meeting is held.

32. An Exhibition was held in November, 1916, the objects of which have been described in the Chapter on Agricultural Industries. An Agricultural Section was organized but the season was not quite suitable for making a good show of local agricultural exhibits. Attempts were made only to secure really good samples of the staple crops, specially of those grown from improved seeds or better methods of cultivation.

Special emphasis was laid on the organization of actual demonstrations of improved agricultural processes by officers of the Agricultural Department.

The demonstrations were divided into the following groups —

- (1) Veterinary
- (2) Sericulture
- (3) Fish rearing and fish curing
- (4) Insect and fungus parasites and their remedies
- (5) Agricultural processes *viz* — butter making, Ghee making and implements such as Winnowing Machine, improved ploughs and hand hoes

- (1) In the Veterinary Section Mr M P Ghosh (Veterinary Inspector, Rajshahi Division) explained the common ailments of farm animals and their remedies.
- (2) Mr A C Ghosh, Superintendent of Sericulture, Bengal showed the different stages in the life history

of the silkworm and the method of rearing followed by the Department. He also showed the methods of rearing silk from cocoons. Captain Johnson of the Salvation Army showed the improved method of silk reeling on the Salvation Army Reeling Machine.

(3) Mr. B. Dass, Superintendent of Fisheries, Bengal, explained the best method of Fish rearing and Fish curing. The district of Rangpur is distinctly poor in its fisheries and the Fishery Section drew large crowds.

(4) The Entomological Collector of the Agricultural Department showed a good collection of the common Insect and Fungus pests of staple crops

(5) Agricultural processes and implements:—

The following processes and implements were shown by the District Agricultural Officer, Rangpur under the supervision of Mr. J. N. Chakraverty —

(1) *Gur* making.

(2) Butter making.

(3) Winnowing, Meston Plough, Punjab Plough, Hand Hoe, Spring Tooth Harrow, and Ridging Plough.

The Rangpur Agricultural Association also took a very important part in contributing to the success of the Exhibition. The Association exhibited a good collection of the different varieties of paddy and other crops grown in the district.

Lectures illustrated by lantern slides were delivered by Mr. F. Smith, Deputy Director of Agriculture, Bengal.

Conservation and distribution of seed

33. Upto now the following improved seeds have been recommended —

(1) Hill potato.

(2) Mr. Finlow's *Kakia* Bombay jute seed.

(3) Mr. Hector's Indrasail paddy.

(4) Kataribhog paddy

(5) Gandari sugarcane

It has been arranged that the sugarcane cuttings and the paddy seeds will be supplied from the Demonstration Farm at Rangpur, which may also supply some jute seeds. But hill potatoes, of course, will have always to be imported from outside the district.

As the demand for seeds was at first limited, very little difficulty was found in supplying the demand. Since 1916, however, the demand has rapidly increased and it has not been possible to cope with the demand with the limited quantity that can be grown on the Farm. The difficulty is specially great with jute seed which cannot be profitably grown in the district. During the present year out of a demand of over 300 maunds only 20 maunds could be supplied. To meet this difficulty the present Director, Mr Mulligan has suggested an excellent scheme by which by making use of all the produce of the fields sown with selected seed for current year's sowing the district will be gradually made self contained as far as supply of jute, paddy, sugarcane and other preservable seeds are concerned. The following scheme has been introduced since the beginning of this year according to the suggestions made by the Director. To every cultivator applying for seeds a small quantity is given which is to be grown exclusively for seed on a separate plot. This quantity may vary but must be enough to sow about a cottah for jute and a bigha for paddy. After keeping enough for next year's requirements he is to hand over the balance to the Agricultural Association at the current market price. This quantity will again be distributed among his neighbours on similar conditions, thus ensuring an automatic and ever increasing supply. Our ultimate object is to distribute improved seed to every Union of the district. As a preliminary trial $8\frac{1}{2}$ maunds of Indrasail paddy was collected at the Burihat Seed Store last year. It is, however, very important that great care should be exercised in ensuring the purity of seeds, as otherwise they will rapidly degenerate. In accordance with this scheme raiats have grown jute and Indrasail paddy seed this year and have taken sugarcane cuttings.

34. Closely connected with the above subject is Seed Stores. the question of providing suitable Seed Stores at convenient centres.

One of the chief difficulties in introducing improved seeds and implements is to arrange suitable means of supplying these to the raiyats. Ordinary cultivators have only got small holdings and and they cannot afford to come to district headquarters for their supply, nor it is possible to supply small quantities direct to the cultivators from the Divisional Seed Stores of the Agricultural Department, as the cost of conveyance would be prohibitive. It is impossible to trust any ordinary dealer to supply the seed pure. In the case of implements one of the chief difficulties is to replace any part which becomes lost or broken. Many Meston ploughs and Hand hoes lie useless simply because a screw is missing and the cultivator cannot come to town to replace it. The question of ensuring supply of pure seeds from the cultivators' own fields has also become very urgent. For the first few years the seeds cannot be left with the raiyats, on the other hand the cost of conveyance to and from the headquarters Seed Store would be very high. To meet these difficulties a small Seed Store was erected in 1915 at Gaibandha at a cost of Rs. 750/- and was placed in charge of a Demonstrator. The Seed Store proved very useful and a second was erected last year at Burirhat. A third has been constructed at Lalmonirhat and a few more will soon be put up at Pirgacha, Tushbhandar and Mohimaganj respectively. Our object is to have a Seed Store at first in every Thana and ultimately in every Union at the joint cost of the Union Committee, District Board, and Agricultural Association.

It is very gratifying that the Seed Stores are providing meeting places of cultivators on *hat* days, and it is hoped that ultimately it will be possible to arrange regular meetings of the cultivators at these stores. Question of suitable localities is very important. The Gaibandha Seed Store was erected near the cutcherries and within the compound of the Local Board Office, which is also the office of the local Central Bank. The Burirhat

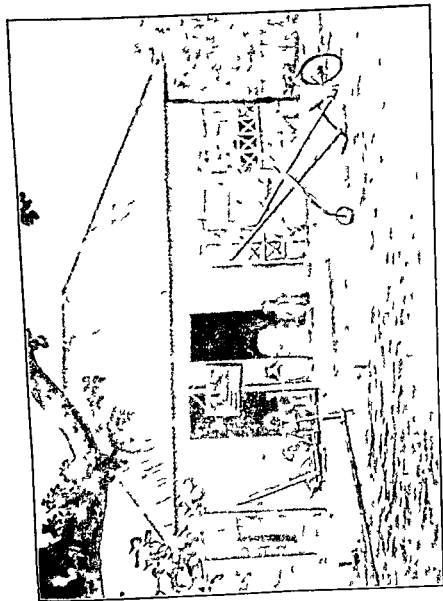
Seed Store is situated close to the Farm, the District Board School and the local *hat*. These Seed Stores are expected to play an important part in the agricultural life of the people. They might be used as meeting places of Co operative Credit Societies and local Panchayats and serve as a symbol of all co operative activities of the agriculturists.

35. In heavy soils bonemeal has done well for paddy

Manures and
implements

But as the soil of the District is mostly light, bonemeal does not give very marked result. One of the cheap and most useful manures for the district is green manuring with cowpea or *dhancha*. This has given very good result on all the Government Farms and is spreading rapidly among the raiyats. This is found to be specially good for tobacco and potato. The preservation and conservation of cowdung in covered pits and more extended use of cowpea as green manure should be the chief items of work in connection with this part of our scheme.

The soil of Rangpur is rather light. On account of the comparatively large holdings of individual raiyats the demand for labour, specially during weeding and harvesting season, is very great. Any labour saving machinery is therefore readily welcomed by the raiyats. Nor are they unwilling to pay reasonable prices. Meston plough has been found very much superior to the country plough for the high lands of the district. The Planet Junior hand hoes are very good for interculture, for such crops as tobacco, potato etc., and are being gradually taken up by the raiyats, specially in the tobacco area. A Meston plough costs Rs 6/ and a Planet Junior hoe about Rs 18/. The first is cheap enough to enable the ordinary cultivator to buy it. But as regards the latter, and also as regards the purchase of seeds the co operation of a number of cultivators and purchase through the Societies of which they are members, will facilitate considerable advance. In the meanwhile, Babu Jamin Kumar Biswas, the energetic Superintendent of the Burihat Farm has made a much cheaper variation of the Planet Junior hoe which



BUR RHAT SEED STORE

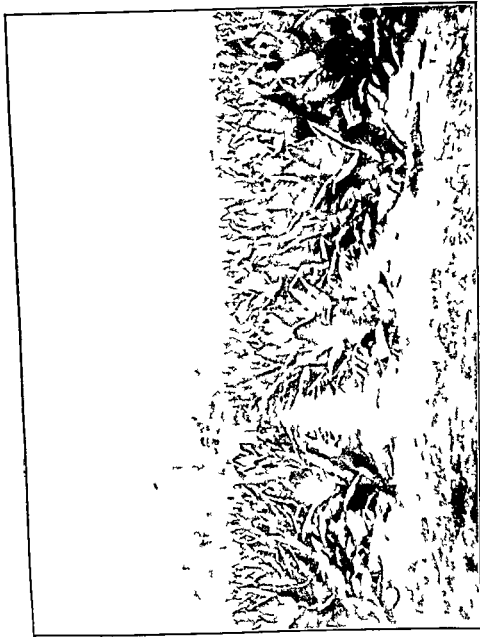
will not cost more than Rs. 4/- and will last quite a long time. The invention is likely to prove a great boon in the tobacco growing areas of the district.

36. *Tobacco*.—The district of Rangpur contains perhaps the most important tobacco growing area in the whole of India. The total area under cultivation is about 200,000 acres and is nearly half the total area grown in the whole of Bengal. But the tobacco of this district is of a coarse description, unfit for manufacture of cigars and cigarettes, such as would find acceptance with European smokers, though it is used to some extent in the manufacture of low grade cheroots and cigarettes for Indian consumption. Much of the tobacco is exported to Burma. A large number of Burmese merchants come to Rangpur in the tobacco season and stop at the houses of local *dalas* and make purchases on a large scale. Burirhat, Habu, Kalagachia, Abulia, etc. are the important centres near about the Burirhat Farm, while others are scattered on both sides of the Teesta. Besides its traffic with Burma Rangpur tobacco supplies the market of almost all the districts of Bengal and a few districts of Assam. As a result of exhaustive experiments at the Burirhat Farm extending over 8 years it has been definitely proved that very great profit can be made by the growing of Sumatra tobacco for cigar wrappers. The Sumatra tobacco gives very nearly the same outturn as the country tobacco, and the cost of cultivation is about the same. The curing and fermentation, however, require a good deal of skill and is more expensive than the ordinary country process. The profits that can be made, however, are very large. In 1911, this tobacco sold at Rs. 90/- per maund which will work out a profit of about Rs. 1,500/- per acre. Last year over 3,000 lbs. have been sold from the Burirhat Farm at an average price of Rs. 45/- per maund. The demand seems to be steadily increasing, specially since the outbreak of the War. A small start was made last year in the introduction of this tobacco among the cultivators. A small quantity was grown by the raiyats in the neighbouring village of Burirhat. The tobacco grew well and was cured at

the Farm, and sold at the price noted above. The cultivators' cost was about Rs 15/ per maund. This year the area was extended to 2 bighas and a curing shed was erected at a cost of about Rs 400/ by the Agricultural Association. The tobacco was grown by the members of the local Co-operative Credit Society, and was cured under the supervision of the District Board Agricultural Overseer and the Farm Superintendent Burirhat. The tobacco turned out well and has been sold at Rs 60/ to Rs 100/ per maund. Arrangements are being made to grow a larger area next season on very much the same principle. The tobacco will be grown by the members of the Co-operative Credit Societies and the sale will be taken up by the Agricultural Association. It is hoped that the cultivators will be able to make a net income of about Rs 50/ per bigha after paying for the curing shed etc. Turkish tobacco has also proved very successful this year and the firm of Messrs Macropolo and Co have offered Rs 82/ per maund for the tobacco grown at the Burirhat Farm. But the demand for this tobacco is reported to be limited. A special point in favour of this tobacco is that it grows well in indifferent soil.

Potato—Potato has been grown on this district since a long time and during harvest season it sells as cheap as Rs 1 8 0 per maund. The local potato however is a very poor yielder, rarely giving more than 70 maunds per acre. The Darjeeling potato which is being recommended by the Department easily gives an outturn of 150 to 200 maunds per acre. There is one factor however, which will limit the cultivation of this variety. The potatoes do not keep well and rot very rapidly. It is only in those places where there is a ready market that these potatoes can be grown at a profit.

Sugarcane—Several varieties of sugarcane have been tested on the Demonstration Farm during the last few years. Taken all round the Gandari sugarcane has proved slightly superior to the local varieties. Several foreign varieties are also tested and some of them promise to turn out very well—but so far the Department of Agriculture is not in a position to make any definite recom-



TOBACCO FIELD BURIRHAT FARM

mendation. The Gandari, however, has become very popular and last year 1,03,875 cuttings were distributed. The same principle for multiplying the seed as with paddy and jute is being observed.

37. The period from 1904-11 was mainly one of experiments. The Department of Agriculture was not prepared to go to the cultivators with definite recommendations. In 1911, a District Agricultural Officer was appointed and a start was made in demonstration among cultivators. In 1912, the Superintendent of Agriculture for the Rajshahi Division moved his headquarters to Rangpur, and since 1913 a special Superintendent of Agriculture was posted to the Dairy Farm, who was also put in charge of Demonstration work of the district. For the first few years progress was necessarily slow. The work was new and the cultivators had gradually to be disabused of any suspicion and feeling of hostility. Experience as to the best policy to be pursued, had to be gained and the officers had to get acquainted with the district and the people. Attention was concentrated mainly on the introduction of hill potatoes, Meston plough and Planet Junior hand hoe. Bonemeal was also tried in various places but on the whole was not very successful. It should be noted here, that the practice of supplying seed and implements gratis was steadily discouraged from the very beginning. In any particular locality demonstrations were usually started through the members of the Agricultural Association and full prices for articles supplied were realised whenever the demonstrations gave successful results. The period of greatest activity is represented by the years 1915-16 and 1916-17. In 1915, Kakia-Bombai jute seed and Indrasail paddy supplied by the expert staff of Dacca were definitely recommended after several tests on the local Farms, as being superior to local varieties. The jute seed was found to give an increased yield of 2 to 3 maunds per acre over the ordinary seeds. In June 1916, the Village Improvement Scheme was introduced and an Agricultural Overseer was appointed for the selected area by the District Board.

The following table showing the quantity of seed etc. distri-

buted will indicate the results of agricultural work done in the district during the last few years :—

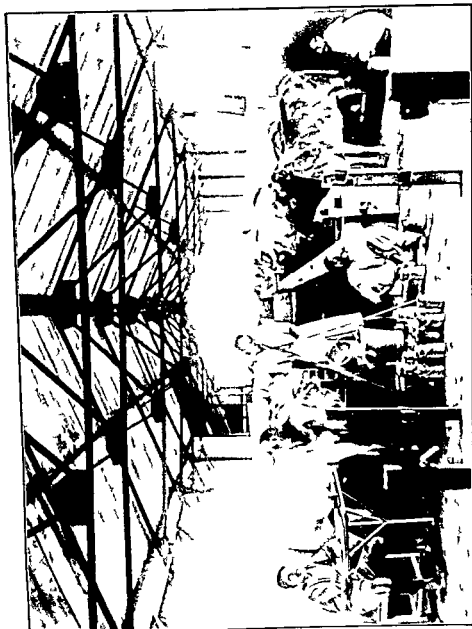
Year	Sugarcane	Jute	Indrasul paddy	Cow pea	Jowar	Potato	Wheat ploughs	Planet Junior hand hoes
1914-15	27,750	3½ md	.	10 mds	1½ mds	150 mds	20	3
1915 16	51,630	7 "	15 38 mds	26 31 "	4½ "	191 "	100	14
1916 17	1,03,875	20 "	230 "	50 "	10 "	377 "	40	4

38. The question of the improvement of agriculture is bound up intimately with the improvement of cattle.

Improve
ment of
cattle

The cattle of Bengal are notoriously poor and no permanent improvement of agriculture is possible without an improvement of the former. Unfortun-

ately, until recently, the question has received very little attention and no systematic attempt at improvement of cattle has been made. In this district the question of their improvement has been occasionally taken up by several Zamindars who have from time to time imported cows and bulls from the Punjab and other places. The Raja of Kakina maintains a small herd of cows of different breeds. But for some reason or other, none of these experiments has proved successful. In 1912 Babu Ashutosh Lahiri, Secretary of the Agricultural Association, drew up a scheme for experiment in the improvement of the local cattle. The question of the improvement of cattle has assumed special importance in the district by the establishment of a Government Cattle-breeding Farm in the town. The question as to the best type of cattle is being investigated by that Farm and need not be discussed here. Even, however, if a suitable animal is produced the question arises as to how to make the best use of it. The system hitherto followed of keeping one or two stud bulls in the District Board Veterinary Dispensary or in the Jail does not appear to have given any tangible results. People from the



CATTLESHEP RANGPUR DAIRY FARM

interior, do not like to bring their cows to great distances for being covered. No record is kept of the offspring and there is nothing to show the effect produced on the progeny of these bulls. Any effect that might be produced in the first generation is again lost in the second, no attempt for systematic and continued improvement being aimed at. The following experiment will therefore be tried on a small scale. As soon as enough bulls are available at the Rangpur Dairy Farm they will be purchased by the District Board. A few villages in the selected area will be taken up and all bulls within this area will either be castrated or removed. The number of bulls necessary for the cows within this area will be supplied by the District Board and will be kept in charge of the President Panchayets and other suitable Jotedars of the locality. Small fees will be realized from villagers making use of the bulls. The cost of maintaining the bulls will be met partly by the Union Committees and partly by the District Board. Systematic records will be kept. It is hoped that by following this system a distinct and definite improvement will be effected in the cattle of the whole locality and that ultimately it will be possible to meet the whole cost of maintaining the bulls from fees alone. By gradually extending this system over the whole of the district a great improvement will be effected.

39. There is one line of work along which little has been done in this district and in fact in Bengal, namely, co-operative sale and purchase of agricultural products. The amount which the cultivators could easily save if they would combine with others in buying their requirements specially seed and manure, is enormous. But this can only be done with the growth of the Co-operative Societies. The possibilities of utilising Co-operative Societies in this district for co-operative purchase and sale of agricultural produce are very large. In many cases the raiyats cannot apply oil-cake as manure, because they cannot get their small demand supplied at reasonable rates. If they could combine and get their requirements from Oil Mills direct they could get them very much cheaper.

Co operation
and ag-
riculture

The Agricultural Officers and the Agricultural Demonstrators who will be generally posted all over the district will be engaged in demonstrating improved methods of agriculture to the raiyats all the year round. In cases of the outbreak of any particular disease of any crops special arrangement will be made for teaching the people of that locality the best means of treating the particular disease or pest.

Arrangements are also being made to have lantern slide demonstrations at *hats* and fairs about improved agricultural methods, diseases of crops and other allied subjects.

On the subject of the training of Union Munshis of the President Panchayets the following occurs in the Village Improvement Scheme :—

“A very satisfactory and practical solution of the question of securing an Agricultural Demonstrator for each Union will be solved if we can educate the Union Munshis for this duty. As has been noted before such an officer will be appointed for each Union and he will have sufficient inducement to do this work as he will get a bonus for good work done in this connection. It is also proposed to give him some practical training at the Agricultural Farm for a short period. Mr. McLean suggests that he should receive instructions in :—

- (1) Handling in implements.
- (2) Handling and storage of seeds.
- (3) Cultivation of potatoes (and perhaps also other important crops like sugarcane, tobacco etc)

Mr. Chakraverty suggests that the Munshi Demonstrator should be responsible not only for collecting the dues from raiyats to whom seeds will be advanced or new implements sold, but he should also help the cultivators in fitting up and using improved implements and show them improved methods of cultivation and sowing etc. I do not think that it will be too much work for the Munshi if he has to perform the above duties as suggested by Mr. Chakraverty. It will be necessary of course to select these men carefully, and judging from the men who have already been appoint-

ed, I do not think that for the pay we are offering we will have any difficulty in getting the right type of men. We have already secured local men who have land of their own are literate and are able to bike and ride. It is very important to have agricultural demonstrations carried on in rural areas by well to do and intelligent raiyats themselves."

13 Munshis have been given practical training in the Farms for a fortnight each during this year. A suggestion has been made to arrange for a regular training class for these men and to combine training in practical agriculture with carpentry and elementary knowledge of surveying. In this town we have an excellent Training School situated close to the Demonstration Farm and the scheme of an elementary agricultural class on the above lines is feasible. Only young men who go out from these classes should be appointed as Union Munshis and there would thus be over 300 such appointments in this district alone.

41 If the improvements outlined above, and which have already come to be appreciated by the raiyats could be introduced over the whole area where they have a reasonable chance of success—the addition to the wealth of a district would be enormous. The following calculations may be interesting —

Crop	Normal area	Actual area on which improved seeds may be sown	Increased out turn per acre	Total increased outturn	Value of increased outturn
	Acres	Acres	Maunds	Maunds	Rs
Jute	3 03 300	1 50 000	2	3 00 000	24,00 000
Transplanted paddy	8 22 300	1 00 000	6	21,00 000	18 00 000
Tobacco	1 94 100	19 410	—	—	29 11,500
Sugarcane	20 500	20 500	10	—	10,25,000

The above figures may at first sight appear startling but there is no reason why, with well organised and sustained effort, they should not be achieved within a reasonable period.

Most of the improvements, outlined above, can be effected with very little extra cost and without incurring any heavy expenditure, and without rendering any direct pecuniary assistance to the raiyats; all that is necessary is to bring the teachings home to cultivators by actual demonstrations.

Improved seeds and implements must be made readily available to them, and arrangements should also be made for agricultural capital at reasonable rates of interest.

The requisites of future progress would appear to be :—

- (1) Authoritative recognition of the policy outlined above and provision for its being carried out for a sufficiently long period
- (2) The strengthening of the staff of the Agricultural Department
- (3) The extension of the Circle System and Union Committees throughout the district
- (4) Close co-operation and co ordination between all the departments concerned
- (5) Opening of an agricultural class for Union Munshis and others interested in practical agriculture

As regards the staff, the Superintendent in charge of the Farm should be in charge of the agricultural operations of the district. There should also be a District Agricultural Officer. There should be four Agricultural Overseers for the four sub-divisions. The Overseers should also be in charge of the sub-divisional store houses. Outlying Seed Stores at convenient centres should be in charge of Seed Depot Clerks or Secretaries of Co-operative Banks. There should be one Demonstrator for each Union. The Union Demonstrator should be paid from local funds—either the District Board Fund or the Union Fund.

It will also be highly desirable if Mr. Chakraverty, who has done such excellent work in connection with the agricultural

improvement of the district could be left here for some time to come, so that there will be a continuity of policy and the work would spread amongst the masses of the people with whom Mr. Chakraverty is so deservedly popular.

CHAPTER V.

PROGRESS OF CO-OPERATION.

42. The economic, educational and agricultural value of co-operation has been dealt with fully in the Government of India Report on Co-operation in India (Resolution No. 12-287 J., June 1914), and also in the Report of the Committee on Co-operation in India, 1915. It is not necessary in this note to deal with these points over again. I have already referred to the observations of the Co-operative Committee regarding the stagnation of the lower classes in India. "The peculiar feature of co-operation as a remedy for stagnation" says the same report "is, that it is intended to meet not only the more obvious material evils but also the underlying moral deterioration to which the poorer classes have so long been exposed." "The theory of co-operation" to quote the pregnant words of same report "is, very briefly, that, an isolated and powerless individual can by association with others and by moral development and mutual support, obtain in his own degree the material advantages available to wealth or powerful persons and thereby develop himself to the fullest extent of his natural abilities. By the union of forces material advancement is secured, and by united action self-reliance is fostered, and it is from the interaction of these influences that it is hoped to attain the effective realization of the higher and more prosperous standard of life which has been characterised as better business, better farming, and better living."

When the Government of India turned its attention to co-operation as the most effective method of dealing with agricultural indebtedness in India, it looked for guidance to the co-operative movement as developed in Europe and more especially to the system of co-operative credit as organised by the German reformer

Raffessen As is well known the Government of Madras took the initiative in the matter, and was the first to grasp the possibilities of a co operative movement in India, and in 1892 the Government of Lord Wenlock placed Mr (now Sir Frederic) Nicholson on special duty 'to study the theory and practice of agricultural and other Land Banks in Europe, and to suggest means by which a similar movement might be popularised in India' Sir Frederic Nicholson drew up an exhaustive report on the systems prevalent in Europe. The following words from Nicholson's report on the suitability of Co operative Banks to the condition of Indian raiyats, are of special interest — 'The masses of French, German and Italian peasants were, and to a great extent still are ignorant, suspicious, conservative isolated and poor, holding land in small and diffused patches, exploited by usurers, incapable of associated effort, unable to comprehend and unwilling to adopt new methods however useful, new improvements however obvious. The description of the peasantry of the Rhine provinces in Germany, of the interior of France, and of Italy, as given by their own as well as by foreign observers, shews that, as regards rural banking, the prospects of the masses in the countries named were little, if at all, better than those in the Madras Presidency of the present day.'

43 Regarding the circumstances which led to the passing of the Co operative Societies Act of 1904 and the subsequent Act of 1912 it is not necessary to enter into any details nor is it necessary to recount the wonderful progress which co operation has made in India during the last 10 years. The progress in Bengal has been equally encouraging.

The Co operative Societies in Bengal are now divided into the following three classes —

- (1) *Primary Societies* which are for the most part composed of small land holders, cultivators, and other persons of limited means. These societies are classified as agricultural if the majority of members are agriculturists.

The Co
Operative
Societies in
Bengal

(2) Unions, which are generally established for exercising supervision and control over the work of a group of Primary Societies, these institutions generally have no banking functions.

(3) Central Banks, which are federal institutions which do banking business and also supervise and control the work of all Primary Societies within a specified area.

44. At present there are four Central Banks and 133 Primary Societies in this district. During the last 4 years the number of societies of all kinds has increased from 37 to 133, the total number of members from 672 to 2,319 and the working capital from Rs. 1,23,380/- to Rs. 3,55,116/-.

Co-operative Societies
in Rangpur

Each Central Bank has got a definite area of operation. The Collector is the Chairman of the Central Bank at Sadar and the Sub-Divisional Officers of the Central Banks in the three sub-divisions. Of the 133 Primary Societies 129 are agricultural and 4 are non-agricultural (urban) banks. No Unions have been established in the district. The work of the Co-operative Societies in this district is now supervised by a Circle Inspector of Co-operative Societies, who is directly under the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. The work of the Supervisors employed by the Central Banks is also tested by him.

45. In 1912-13 there was only one Central Bank at Gaibandha.

The other three Central Banks at Nilphamari, Kuri-gram and Sadar were formed during the past three years

The area covered by a Central Bank is the administrative sub-division.

The management of the Banks is carried on by a Board of Directors. The Sadar, Gaibandha and Nilphamari Central Banks have got working Committees in addition, who carry on the ordinary work of the Board subject to its approval. The services of the directors are everywhere honorary. No sitting fees are paid to the Directors. No travelling allowance is paid to the Directors who reside in the moffussal.

Generally speaking, the Central Banks are progressing towards efficiency and as a rule Directors take an interest in their work. A good deal of work devolves upon the Chairman who are all officials at present. The chief agency for inspecting the societies is the inspecting staff. Each Central Bank has got a Supervisor to look after the working of the village societies. But the staff in its turn requires supervision, and their work requires to be tested on the spot. The Sub-Divisional Officers now exercise a general supervision over the work of the inspecting staff, but gradually a whole-time Secretary will have to be appointed to take up their work.

The working capital of a Central Bank is made up of (1) Subscribed Share Capital, (2) Reserve Fund, (3) Deposit of members and non-members (4) Specific loans from individuals or Banks. All the Central Banks of this district are of the mixed type, i.e., both individuals and societies are enlisted. The value of each share is Rs 50/- and in every case half the value is called up and the other half is treated as the reserve liability of the share-holders except in the Nilphamari Central Bank where the whole amount has been called up with the approval of the Registrar. The share capital of the Central Banks has risen from Rs. 6,825/- in 1912-13 to Rs. 25,511/- in 1916-17. The present share capital together with the Reserve Fund represents 105.3 per cent of the total liabilities of the Banks which is a sure index of their financial stability.

The bulk of the capital of the Central Bank is derived from deposits. Local deposits have increased from Rs. 2,210/- in 1912-13 to Rs. 31,510-3-6 in 1916-17, but this only represents a small per cent of the total deposits. Here there is a scope for much improvement, and it is to be hoped that the local public will invest their money more freely in the Central Banks of their district.

The Alliance Bank of Simla has opened a cash credit account for Rs. 50,000/- with the Gaibandha Central Bank. No current deposits are accepted by any of the Central Banks. Fixed deposits are accepted at rates varying from Rs. 6/- to Rs. 8/- per cent per annum, and they are accepted on the condition that the depositors give a certain prescribed notice of withdrawal.

usually which varies from six months to four years. The deposits are now received and repaid under certain deposit rules framed by the Board of Directors. The rate of interest paid on outside loans and deposits raised through the Registrar are fixed by him.

The Reserve Fund of the Central Banks has risen from Rs. 490/- to Rs. 4,358/- during the past 5 years.

The Gaibandha Central Bank has invested Rs. 3,000/- in the War Loan.

Some of the Central Banks maintain Building Funds. The sale proceeds of Account Books are credited to Inspection Fund, and they can only be drawn upon for meeting inspection expenses.

The Nilphamari Central Bank has already taken up the construction of its office building and the Sadar and Gaibandha Central Banks, are also taking steps to erect suitable buildings for their office.

All the Central Banks are now working at a profit. During 1916-17 Gaibandha and Rangpur Banks declared $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. dividends and Nilphamari and Kurigram declared $9\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

46. The number of Primary Societies has risen from 37 in 1912-13, to 129 in the past year and the combined

Primary
Societies.

working capital from Rs. 1,23,380/- to Rs. 3,55,116/-.

The increase of Primary Societies within the area of operation of each of the Central Banks during the quinquennium is shown below :—

Central Banks.	1912-13	1913-14	1914-15	1915-16	1916-17
Gaibandha C. B. ...	37	14	18	48	18
Rangpur C. B. ...	...	...	..	9	37
Nilphamari C. B.	..	..	11	13	24
Kurigram C. B. ...	...	9	13	13	20
Total ...	37	53	72	83	129

There has thus been an increase of 92 societies during the past 1 years due principally to the activity of the Nulphamari Kurigram and Sadar Central Banks. Out of 120 societies 122 are affiliated to Central Banks. The number of societies membership, and the capital have risen by 248.8 per cent 274.8 per cent and 187.8 per cent respectively during the past 1 years. The progress is phenomenal. Honorary organisers have been appointed in the Nulphamari and Kurigram sub-divisions by the Government.

The funds of the Primary Societies are usually drawn from the following sources—(1) Share Capital and Reserve Fund (2) Deposits of members and non members and (3) Loans from other societies. Only in the Gaibandha sub-division some Primary Societies have been able to raise share capital but all the societies still depend on loans from Central Banks for their every day finance and ordinary requirements. The growth of local capital has hitherto been very slow. In the rural areas the capital is principally in the hands of the money lenders who try to make a large profit by investing the money at an exorbitant rate of interest. The majority of the members are in debt and have no money to spare for making deposits.

Deposits of members have increased from Rs 3 696/ to Rs 23 023/ during the past 5 years.

Central Banks give loans to Societies for a fixed term. The Societies lend this money to individual members making it repayable within the period fixed by the Central Banks. During the past year Rs 1 15 839/ were issued to members as loans as against Rs 63 280/ in the year 1912-13. Loans are generally granted for (1) payment of debts (2) purchase of cattle or land (3) cultivation expenses (4) payment of rent (5) house repairs (6) maintenance &c.

The Reserve Fund of the Primary Societies during the past five years has increased from Rs 6 403/ to Rs 54 295/. The progress is satisfactory. The Reserve Fund is kept separately invested in liquid form in Central Banks as far as practicable and upto 30th June 1917 a sum of Rs 28 030/ has been invested in this way. The Gaibandha Central Bank has this year purchased War Bonds for

25,000/- and the Nilphamari Central Bank for Rs. 300/- out of this fund.

47. The co-operative movement is gradually creating a solidarity of feeling and neighbourly spirit amongst the people and also providing a nucleus of authority to which village disputes can be referred. It has in some quarters stimulated village life by associated action and by the business education of the bank; the elements of punctuality, thrift, and mutual confidence are also being slowly extended. It is gratifying to note that in the Gaibandha sub-division the Co-operative Societies at Kholahati and Kuptala have established a Madrasa, a Girls' school and a Lower Primary school. The members of Ghagoa, Saripur, and Rajibpur Societies in the same sub-division have founded and maintained a Girls' school, a combined boys and girls' school and a Lower Primary school respectively. The Co-operative Societies at Govindapur and Rajibpur in Gaibandha pay an annual grant-in-aid to the Lakshipur M. E. school out of their net profits. The movement is still in its infancy and its educative and beneficent influence has not yet been very widely felt. But with the increase in the number of these societies and the simultaneous advance of the village institutions to which reference has been made before, there is very little doubt that the district will gradually be covered by a network of self-governing and self-reliant institutions which will instil new life into every department of village life, municipal, economic and sanitary.

48. The work of starting new societies on sound co-operative principles should go on unremittingly. The object of these societies should be twofold, to relieve the load of indebtedness of the agriculturist and teach him the value of thrift and self-reliance, and also to help the cultivator to get superior seed in large quantities and improved implements, and also, if possible, to sell his produce at an advantage in convenient markets. In other words, our aim should be to establish both co-operative productive and sale societies. The great scope for agricultural progress which is offered by the

Effect of
Co-operation

Programme
of future
work.

co operative movement and the action which it is proposed to be taken in this direction have already been dealt with in the section under Agriculture. As has been seen, not very much has yet been done in this direction in this district, as the demand of agriculturists for better seed, manure &c has not yet been stimulated very much, but the important thing to remember is that the needs of the agriculturists for improved seeds etc, will grow with the growth of co operative societies to feed such wants. Accordingly we are concentrating attention on the societies which have grown up round about the Burirhat Farm and we want to take up work on the lines of work done by the 11 small village Banks in the immediate neighbourhood of the Dacca Farm and by the Bhairab Local Banks, of which an account occurs in Mr Finlow's Report for 1914-15.

Our object should be to bring about a state of things outlined in the Administration Committee's Report, "when agriculture and co-operation will go hand in hand and cover the country with network of truly organic institutions, evolved and built up by the cultivating classes themselves, for the advancement of their own financial and economic interests." And as the co operative movement is to be developed in close association with the Circle System, the societies being grouped whenever possible according to Unions, the President of the Union being the Honorary Organizer of the societies within his Union, it may be possible in this district 'to induce the Co operative and Agricultural Departments to think in terms of Panchayati Unions and thus prepare the way for a great advance in the work of these departments" as anticipated by the Administration Committee

CHAPTER VI.

EDUCATION.

SECTION I.

PROGRESS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS.

49. It is to the want of education among the lower classes that most of their material and intellectual stagnation is to be attributed. "Of all administrative problems" remarks Sir T. W. Holderness "the improvement and defusion of education in India is probably the one that at the present moment weighs most heavily with the Government. Most of the difficulties which modern India presents have their roots in the ignorance and defective education of the people. The masses have far too little education; the education of the majority is gravely defective."

Taking the district as a whole, it was found at the last census that of boys and girls of school-going age only 25·5 per cent. of the boys and 2·6 per cent. of the girls or 13·6 per cent. of the total attended schools. During the last three years there has been a steady advance in this direction and in 1916-17 the percentage of boys was 32·5 and for girls 6·4. There is one school per 2·5 square miles of the area of the district. Even these figures, depressing as they are, do not give any adequate idea of the poor equipment of our village schools, and the extremely nominal character of the education imparted in them.

Impediments and line
of future progress

50. The drawbacks in the existing system of rural education may be enumerated as follows :—

- (1) Low standard of the need of education amongst the rural class.

- (2) Paucity of the number of schools in rural areas.
- (3) Unsatisfactory character of existing schools due to inefficient teaching staff, inadequate equipment, and unsatisfactory housing of existing schools.
- (4) Unsatisfactory financial condition of these schools.
- (5) Want of any local organisation for the proper management of these schools.
- (6) To the above there is an important body of opinion which would add that the existing curricula of rural schools and their administration are in need of some change to make them more suitable to the actual surroundings of the boys of rural India.

From one point of view the want of sufficient financial resources is at the root of all our difficulties and the question of finance forms the key to the whole situation. If we had more money we could have more schools, better type of schools and better trained and better qualified teachers. Of course that would not do away with the need of adequate and suitable local organisation for the management of village schools, for it is quite obvious that even with greatly augmented financial resources no satisfactory arrangement can be made for the management of the daily increasing number of these schools through the outside agency of either the officers of the Education Department or of the General Department, without the support and assistance of the people of the villages concerned.

A practical programme for the improvement of rural education should probably include the following items:—

- (1) Enhancement of the resources for financing rural schools.
- (2) Establishment of new schools in areas where schools are urgently needed
- (3) Improvement of the building and equipment of existing schools.
- (4) Improvement in the qualifications and prospects of village teachers and their method of teaching.

- (5) Changes in the curricula and methods to suit rural education to actual requirements.
- (6) Adoption of suitable means for increasing the population and attendance of rural schools.
- (7) Improvement of school hygiene.
- (8) Adoption of measures for due co-operation between the officers of the General Department, Education Department, and Local Bodies and village institutions for the proper management and maintenance of village schools.

Financial Resources 51. Under the present arrangement the sources from which rural schools may be financed are :—

- (1) Income of schools from fees etc.
- (2) Local contributions in the shape of voluntary subscriptions.
- (3) Grants from the District Board.
- (4) Grants from the Education Department of Government.

The total expenditure on Primary schools increased from Rs. 1,31,186/- in 1912-13 to Rs. 1,93,619/- in 1916-17. Of the sum spent in 1916-17 Rs. 88,186/- was derived from public and Rs. 1,05,435/- from private sources—the major portion of which represented schooling fees. Contributions in the shape of voluntary subscription represented only 7 per cent. of the total expenditure. But of course this does not include the contributions of the public for the construction of school houses for which large sums have been spent.

The principal features of Educational Administration of the district during the last 3 or 4 years has been the marked increase of the allotment made by the District Board for Primary Education. This grant has increased from Rs. 39,762/- in 1911-12 to Rs. 96,116/- in 1915-16 and was Rs. 84,528/- in 1916-17, the Imperial assignment of the 2 years being Rs. 53,020/- and Rs. 47,905/- respectively. But we have now fairly reached the limit of the aid which the District Board with its present resources, can render to Primary

Education It is now spending on education a 28 per cent of its total income. Expenditure on this head cannot be increased any further without seriously trenching on the legitimate requirements of other important departments. It may be possible that Imperial assignments for Primary Education may be still further increased in future years; but it is unlikely that without a very marked and substantial increase in local contribution any comprehensive scheme of improved rural schools can be carried out. This local contribution may be obtained either by a substantial increase of the rate of schooling fees or by a general tax or by voluntary subscriptions. The consensus of opinion is that elementary education in rural areas should be cheap, if not completely free. No permanent scheme can be based on voluntary subscriptions. The only alternative therefore seems to be a general Education Tax. The desirability of zamindars' contributing to this tax which will benefit their raiyats and therefore indirectly the zamindars themselves appear to be obvious. The advisability of imposing a local rate in Bengal, for the advancement of Primary Education was recognised as early as 1859, and was recommended in Lord Derby's Educational Despatch of 1859. In 1869 Sir William Grey the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal strongly recommended such an impost and his recommendations received the formal approval of the Government of India and the Secretary of State (See the Despatch of the Duke of Argyll, 1870.) In 1872, Sir George Campbell in his Mofussal Municipal Bill provided for a comprehensive scheme for the development of Primary Education by self-taxation, but unfortunately the Bill was vetoed by Lord Northbrook. And nothing has yet been done in this direction in Bengal, although in other provinces, notably in Bombay, substantial progress has been made with the assistance of local rates for Primary Education. Popular opinion in Bengal is now decidedly in favour of permitting by legislation selected District Boards and Municipalities to introduce an Educational Tax within their jurisdictions. Under the present law District Boards have no such powers. It is true that section 118 (C) of the Local Self-Government Act empowers

Union Committees to levy a local rate for certain definite purposes, but unfortunately education is not one of the objects for which the power of taxation has been given to Union Committees. Perhaps the Act may be amended in the near future with a view to giving Union Committees adequate power in this connection. In this district a very useful beginning has been made in systematizing the contributions of the people of rural areas for the improvement and maintenance of their village schools. As has been noted before a fixed amount is to be set apart from the Union Funds for the educational institutions of the Union. Up to the present 48 formal and 44 informal rural societies have been established in the district, and if we get Rs. 175/- from each rural committee we will have an additional annual income of Rs. 16,100/- for improvement of rural education. When Union Committees are established all over the district a sum of Rs. 62,825/- will be available annually for this purpose.

52. At the end of the quinquennium closing with 1916-17 Primary schools for boys numbered 1,362 with 48,256 pupils including 1,536 girls. In 1913-14 there were only 1,074 schools with 40,329 pupils. Thus during the last 3 years there has been increase of 288 schools and of 7,927 pupils. Of the existing schools 231 are Board's Primary schools, 936 aided Lower Primary schools, 72 unaided Lower Primary schools and the remaining 123 Upper Primary schools. At present the area served by a Primary school is 2.5 sq. miles against 3.4 in 1911-12 and there is one school for 5.5 villages against one school in 7 villages in 1911-12. One school for an area of 2.5 sq. miles should not prove very inadequate, if the means of communication are good and if there is sufficient accommodation in the school, and the school is a well-managed institution. But the total number of pupils in the primary stage of instruction was only 55,933 at the close of the quinquennium and only 38.9 per cent of the total number of boys of school-going age were attending school. If Primary Education becomes compulsory or universal, other things remaining the same, the number of schools will thus have to be

more than trebled But it is found that the average strength of a rural school was only 35 1 during last quinquennium A village school may easily accommodate 50 to 75 pupils, we can educate a very much larger number of pupils even in our existing schools without increasing their number by improving the housing accommodation and their general condition But schools are not well distributed and a census of existing schools in selected Unions is being taken with a view to finding out the neglected areas A similar census of the whole district will be necessary In the meanwhile improvement in the general condition of our existing schools with special reference to improvement of accommodation is much more important than any attempts to increase the number of our schools In fact the promiscuous growth of ephemeral and irresponsible village schools, known as 'Venture schools' is a source of danger to the progress of sound education in rural areas, and it has been suggested that Union Committees should have the power of controlling and regulating the starting of new schools in the Union

With regard to the question of increasing the literacy of the people of rural areas our object should be to gradually improve the number and condition of the rural schools, with the ultimate aim of imparting elementary education to all children of school going age "For however far off this goal may be and whatever may be the practical difficulties in the way at present, it is an ideal which" as Sir T W Holderness says "will have to be kept in sight and followed as time and circumstance permit" As we are not empowered by law to introduce compulsion in any form, the Circle Officers, the Sub Divisional Officers and other officers of the Education Department will have to rely entirely on their powers of persuasion to induce the parents to send their children to our schools It is needless however to remark that our success in this direction will depend almost entirely in the improvement of the material condition of our agriculturists, in the improvement in the attractiveness and efficiency of our schools, and in the gradual spread of education amongst the rural classes

53. All Board's Lower Primary schools numbering 231 have got fairly suitable houses and compounds. The buildings were constructed at an average cost of Rs. 700/- from the Imperial grants with the assistance of local subscriptions which amounted to Rs. 100/- on an average in each case. Two types of buildings were constructed from the Imperial grant—one a comparatively cheaper type—at an average cost of Rs 500/- for each house, and a more expensive type at Rs. 800/- for which special sanction was obtained for this district. From last year the construction of new Board's Lower Primary school buildings from the Imperial allotment has been discontinued, but under B. G. General Deptt., Education Cir. No. 16 dated 9-10-15 Government has undertaken to pay two-thirds of the expenses for repairing Board's Lower Primary school buildings if the District Board pay the remaining one-third. Hitherto the work of carrying out the repairs of these school buildings has been under the supervision of the engineering staff of the District Board. But having regard to the increasing work of that staff and the general increase in the number of such schools, it has been decided in future to entrust the work of repairs to the Union Committees, and the Circle Sub-Overseers assisted when necessary by the District Engineer's staff.

The problem now is to find sufficient funds for the construction of proper buildings for all rural schools and also for keeping them in repairs after they have been constructed. Marked progress has been made in this district during the last 3 or 4 years in improving the condition of the buildings for all village schools. The following table shows the number of Primary school buildings which have been constructed or improved during the last 3 years:—

Class of schools.	No. of buildings constructed.	No of buildings improved	Aid from D B	Private contribution.	TOTAL.
B. L. P. schools	7	197	35,709/-	3,215/-	38,924/-
Aided schools	195	127	21,044/-	32,400/-	53,444/-
Private schools				5,500/-	5,500/-

But the improvement in the condition of Primary schools not maintained by the District Board has not been so striking as the improvement of the buildings of Middle English schools. Public benefaction is more easily attracted for educational institutions which teach English than for those which do not. But still there has been marked progress, and under the scheme of setting apart a portion of the Union Fund for educational institutions provision at least for the repair of these buildings will be made.

54. As regards improvement of the qualification of teachers and the method of teaching, the difficulty of providing efficient and capable teachers and also of providing adequate remuneration for them, are recognised to be the most important and difficult questions in connection with this department of the educational problem. But here again, as already observed finance forms the key to the whole situation. If we can afford to pay our teachers more, a better class of men will soon be forthcoming to take charge of our schools. At present even a trained *guru* of a Primary school seldom gets more than Rs. 10/- or Rs. 12/- a month. If this remuneration is increased to Rs. 15/- a month with the prospect of a rise to Rs. 20/- we are sure to get a better class of men. There are four institutions in this district for the training of teachers for rural schools. The one at Rangpur is a first grade Training school for turning out teachers of vernacular subjects in Secondary schools. In 1916-17 twenty five *gurus* were being trained at this school. The three schools at the sub-divisional headquarters of the outlying sub-divisions are for teaching *gurus* for Primary schools. The three schools had on their rolls 83 *gurus* in 1916-17. New buildings have been recently constructed for the Nilphamari Guru Training school, and schemes for the construction of improved buildings for Gaibandha and Kurigram are also ready. In all these three Guru Training schools schemes for manual and agricultural training are being tried experimentally.

The following table shows the increase in the number of trained teachers in Primary schools :—

Year.	Board's Primary schools.	Primary schools under private management.	Girls' Primary schools.	TOTAL.
1914-15	193	163	20	385
1915-16	196	186	74	456
1916-17	206	222	85	513

It has been calculated that the average pay of the Primary school teachers under private management in this district is Rs. 7-8-0, and the average for all classes of Primary schools is Rs. 8/5/-. Payment is uncertain and the prices of all articles of consumption are steadily on the increase, and the contribution of villagers in the form of doles is steadily on the decrease. It is a matter of great urgency therefore to devise some means for increasing the remuneration of village teachers. The imposition of a special education tax for rural areas seems to offer the only practical solution.

55. The next important question in connection with rural education is the method of education and training to be followed in these schools. It has been complained that the rural schools stand somewhat apart at present from village life and with local agricultural conditions.

The dissolution of the old prosperous village life is also ascribed to the unwillingness of the villager to-day to return to his ancestral village and his ancestral calling after he has once left it to learn English at some school in town. The importance of developing agriculture and agricultural education as a direct help to the growth of general education in rural areas has also been brought to notice. The subject has been dealt with in the important resolution of Government of India of March 1913 where it is laid down :—"It is not practicable at present in most parts of India to draw any great distinction between the curriculum of rural and

Need for making education more practical in rural areas

urban Primary schools, but in the latter class of schools there is special scope for practical teaching of Geography, school excursions etc. Nature study should vary with the environment and some other form of simple knowledge of the locality might advantageously be substituted for the study of the village maps. As competent teachers become available a greater differentiation in the course will be possible. In the ordinary elementary schools formal agriculture is not taught, but in some provinces a "markedly agricultural colour" is given to the general scheme of education." And in the quinquennial report for 1907 to 1912 we find one of the cardinal principles of policy stated thus "The scheme for Primary and Secondary Education for the average scholar should steadily, as trained teachers become available, be diverted to more practical ends, *e.g.*, by means of manual training, gardening, outdoor observation, practical teaching of Geography, school excursions, organized tours of instructions, &c." The question of imparting a suitable type of education for the sons of agriculturists in rural areas has been reviewed with great insight by Mr McKenna, M.A., I.C.S., in his pamphlet on Agriculture in India. The consensus of opinion is decidedly in favour of the opinion expressed by Mr McKenna, that it is now agreed that agriculture as such cannot be taught in schools, that rural education must be general and the agricultural education technical. That even on the most liberal assumption the proportion of the agricultural classes touched as yet by education must be very small indeed. This being the case, it seems clearly undesirable to add to the burden of the infant mind which is struggling with the effort to learn to read by weighing it with crude and undigested agricultural knowledge." But he goes on to observe, "In Primary school there is at the same time no reason why the lessons which the pupil learns should not have to do with things with which he is familiar. Simple nature study and school gardens will also help to adjust his education to his environment. But the basis of all education in India as everywhere else must be a good grounding in the 'three R's'. And it is only in this way that the intelligence of the pupil can be awakened

so as to enable him to read and himself to apply what he reads to his surroundings."

As far as I am aware no final official pronouncement has yet been made on the recommendations of the last Conference on Agricultural Education. But the Conference itself very strongly recommended the pushing of Agricultural Education both in Primary and Secondary schools.

In this connection it should be noted that since 1901 when the question was first thoroughly examined by the Simla Conference of Lord Curzon the tendency in Bengal has been to give a more scientific and practical turn to the curricula of Primary and Middle schools. The Bengal curriculum introduced by Mr. Pedler was in fact found to be too elaborate and difficult for the boys of the age for which it was meant and modification in the direction of simplicity has been necessary. I think therefore that for the present our efforts should be directed not so much to any modification of the present curricula as in securing more efficient and intelligent teaching of the curricula already prescribed. In the Scheme of Village Improvement of Rangpur the following recommendations were made last year —

- (1) Selected schools should have a garden. At first only very few schools should be selected for this purpose, perhaps one for each Union. In these gardens plots should be set apart for a group of boys for cultivation of different crops in different seasons. The cultivation of such crops as paddy or jute with which boys are already familiar and which are not likely to excite much interest, will not prove sufficiently attractive and should not therefore be attempted. In the winter season potatoes, English vegetables like peas, cabbages, cauli-flowers and turnips are likely to excite interest amongst boys, particularly if the boys are allowed to appropriate the produce of the plots cultivated by them. In the hot months country vegetables may be tried in

place of English vegetables. In the rains the boys should be trained to prepare their plots for the sowing of seeds in winter.

It will greatly improve the compound of schools and give a very useful occupation to the boys if they devote some time to growing hardy English flowers as marigold &c. It will be a great help in developing this aspect of rural education, if flower and vegetable shows of the produce of school gardens were to be held once a year for each circle, and the Sub Divisional Officers were to give away prizes to the most successful exhibitors.

In connection with this part of the subject it is obvious that the scheme presupposes that we get *gurus* who know something about agriculture. Mr Chakraborty has suggested that in the Guru Training schools practical training should be given to the *gurus* in the Agricultural Farms. The idea is good but the details will have to be settled between the Education and the Agricultural Departments. Besides the above training in the Training schools the *gurus* should receive instruction from the Board's Agricultural Officer who would also explain to them the meaning and the value of any demonstration work which might be carried on in the neighbouring fields. In fact if the *guru* is fairly intelligent and takes some interest in this part of his work he would not require much technical or special training.

I am aware that nature study and gardening are included in the existing curricula of rural schools and that the result achieved in these directions have not been up to now very encouraging. But I also know from experience that beyond including these subjects in the curricula no serious efforts have really been made to translate theory into practice. Want of

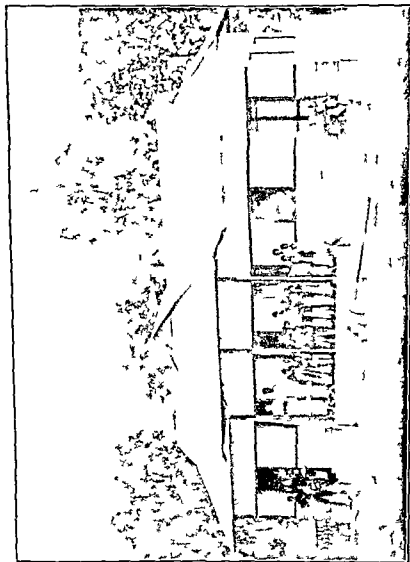
sufficient funds, want of trained teachers and want of any intelligent supervision share the responsibility for the comparative failure of the scheme hitherto, and I do not think that there are any sufficient reasons for holding that a scheme of education which has proved so eminently successful in America and other countries will prove entirely barren of good results in rural India. But it is to be feared that there will be no tangible results for sometime to come

- (2) Periodical day excursions should be arranged for the boys of 2 or 3 neighbouring schools, when they should be taken out to see any place of interest in the neighbourhood of any agricultural demonstration either in the growing of new seeds or the use of better manure or better implements. This is more likely to awaken an interest in agricultural matters in boys than any demonstrations carried out in any school garden itself. Such excursions should be treated as holidays and they should be so arranged as to afford both interest and pleasure to the boys.
- (3) Arrangement should be made to impart instruction, on agriculture, hygiene, and Nature study through lantern-slide demonstrations. Along with pictures which are intended to impart instruction, pictures likely to increase the general information of the students and those which will appeal to his sense of humour and help to develop his artistic instincts should also be shown.
- (4) Schools should be held in the mornings only and not for more than 4 hours in the hot months of the year, and in the day in the cold months. If the school hours are not too long the boys of the agriculturists and cultivators will still have some time

- (1) The Burirhat School has been practically newly strated at Burirhat contiguous to the Burirhat Farm and the Burirhat Seed Store for this experiment. It was originally a mile off at Nilakhandi where it had a miserable house and a small attendance of 12 to 15 boys. The first step was to construct a model school house for a village Primary school. The new building has cost Rs 1400/-. It began with 15 boys and in less than a year the roll number has risen to over 80. Nothing can be more instructive regarding the manner in which a suitable building, efficient management and general local interest enhance the popularity of a school than the progress of this school. A garden has now been laid out in the compound and manured with green cowpeas. Crops will be grown this winter.

- (2) More work was done in the Uttambaragharia School. In the compound of the school potato, cabbage, cauliflower, chilli &c. were grown last year by the boys themselves with the help of the teachers. No use was made of the hired labour at any stage. The boys were taught the value and use of manure and the method of watering the plants and weeding them. The outturn was quite good specially that of potato which was exhibited at the agricultural gathering last year, opened by the Divisional Commissioner. The boys of the school were awarded a silver medal in consideration of the excellence of the potato exhibited.

56. At the present stage of the growth of Union Committees in the district it is not practicable to make over the entire management of Primary schools to these bodies, but the office-bearers of the village institutions are being gradually given greater powers with regard to the supervision and management of these schools. All Presidents



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to spare for doing the actual work of the field and helping their parents.

- (5) The school holidays should be regulated as far as possible according to the agricultural requirements of the parents of the children. The most important season from an agricultural point of view, for the sowing of such crops as jute, bhadaï paddy, etc. is from the middle of March to the middle of May, and then again from August to September for the reaping of jute and bhadaï paddy. For the reaping of winter paddy and rabi crops, December and January are important months. Holidays should be arranged to fit in with these seasons as far as possible.
- (6) Lastly some provision should be made for imparting manual instruction to the boys. Carpentry classes have already proved successful in some rural schools in this district like Kamarjani, Mohimaganj and Sodepur in the Gaibandha sub-division. I think a carpentry class should be attached to selected schools in each Union. Here again we might begin with one school in each Union or perhaps 2 schools in each thana. The boys should be taught to make furniture required for their own schools. Materials should be supplied from the Union Fund. One of the *gurus* of such schools should be a person who has been trained in the artisan class of our Technical school at Rangpur. Another form of manual training which suggests to me is house repairing necessary for houses of the type of their own school houses, and in thatching roofs and in putting on roofs of corrugated iron. This training is likely to be of great use to the boys in their after-life and will be some solution of the present trouble of keeping school houses in repairs."

It will be seen that the above scheme proposes to introduce manual training as a part of the instruction to be imparted in Primary and Middle schools, whereas the Director of Public Instruction in his letter No. 281 of the 10th April 1915, recommends a beginning to be made "by introducing instruction in woodwork in the upper classes of selected High schools and Zilla schools." It is however stated in that letter that the ideal would be to introduce the system into all classes of schools provided sufficient funds and suitable teachers are available. It would seem more natural to introduce this form of instruction at a comparatively early stage of the child's mental growth when instruction through his hands and eyes are likely to create lasting impressions.

It has been said that public sentiment is against boys in schools taking to any form of manual exertion and what is wanted first is to create a healthy public opinion in favour of the dignity of labour. It is doubtful whether there is much truth about the existence of such a sentiment, for instance all the boys of the Rangpur Zilla school now attend the carpentry classes in the Technical school. Boys in rural schools are far less likely to have such sentiments. In any case sentiment in favour of manual labour will not be created unless this form of instruction is actually introduced into schools and made attractive for the boys. But I agree that if the system is introduced it must be made a compulsory part of the curricula and not an optional subject.

During the last year the experiment of introducing agricultural and manual instruction in rural schools was made in 2 Primary and 2 Middle schools in the Sadar. It was anticipated that rapid progress could not be made as the work could only be introduced in schools which had attained a minimum level of efficiency and where there were special facilities for agricultural education, and for which suitably trained teachers could be engaged. The Primary schools selected were all in the area to which the Circle System had been introduced. They were (1) the Burirhat B. L. P. School and (2) the Uttambaragharia B. L. P. School.

have been appointed *ex-officio* visitors of the recognised schools in their Unions. In many cases Panchayets have been appointed Secretaries. The work of repairing these school houses will in future be done entirely through the agency of Union Committees. But there is no question that with the development of village institutions and an increase in the number of village schools their management will have to be made over more and more completely to Union Committees as desired by the recent circular of the Government of India. The measures which have been adopted for the financing of rural schools from Union Funds has already been described. If the village Unions are to supply the funds it is only natural, other considerations apart, that they should have a voice in the management of these schools. I think, it is also very likely that the distinction between B. L. P. Schools and other recognised schools will have to be abandoned and the funds available to the District Board from their own resources and the special grant from the Local and Imperial Governments will have to be divided equally between all the Union Committees of the district for the maintenance by those bodies of the recognised schools in their jurisdiction.

SECTION II.

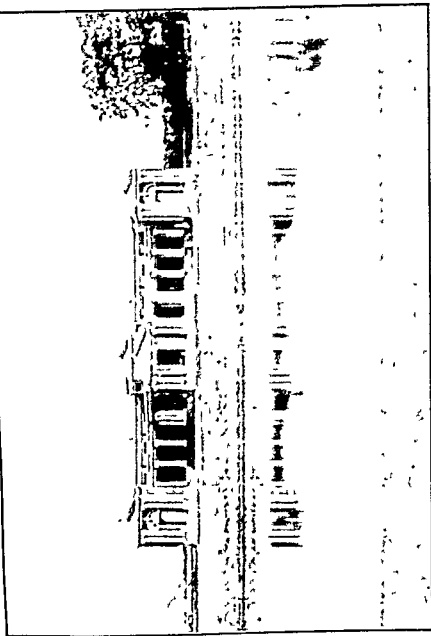
PROGRESS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Factors for progress **57.** As in the case of Primary Education the requirements of Secondary Education may be summarized as follows:—

- (1) Improvement of buildings and appliances &c. of existing schools.
- (2) Improvement in the teaching staff of these schools.
- (3) Establishment of new schools where they are wanted.
- (4) Increase of the resources for financing these schools.

58. Great strides have been taken in this district both in increasing the number and improving the condition of Middle schools. The number of Middle schools increased to 79 last year from 51 at the end of 1913-14. There was thus an increase of 28 schools. The pupils attending these schools also increased from 6,175 to 8,016. The direct expenditure of the District Board increased from Rs 5,375/- in 1913-14 to Rs 8,360/- in 1916-17. But the most marked improvement took place in the building of these Middle English schools. In the Gaibandha subdivision alone 31 houses were newly constructed or old ones improved at a total cost of Rs. 40,464/- out of which the District Board sanctioned grants of Rs. 5,750/-. Similarly the buildings of Middle English schools in other parts of the district were either improved or re-constructed and the total number of schools in the district for which the District Board's grants were made was 61. To set up models for mofussal Middle English schools, a Middle English school building was constructed last year at the headquarters of the district at a cost of Rs. 15,000/-, out of which the Maharaja of Cossimbazar contributed Rs. 6,000/-. It has now nearly 200 pupils on its rolls. A similar Middle English school will be established at Nilphamari and the construction of the building which will cost Rs 12,000/- has already been taken up. The Kurigram Middle English school though not housed in a pucca building is also a flourishing institution and has already got 200 students on its rolls. In Gaibandha also we shall soon want a Middle English school although we have two High English schools there, as the lower classes in the High schools will have to be done away with. The good example set by these model Middle English schools is already bearing fruit. The new Middle English school house at Pirgachha is a fine masonry building which has just been completed and of which the foundation was laid by the Commissioner in February last. This building cost Rs. 8,000/- and the entire cost has been subscribed by the public. This Middle English school was started only in last year and has already got 100 boys on its rolls. A similar building has been put down at Bhurungamari for which

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the Maharaja has paid Rs. 2,000/- and the public has subscribed Rs. 4,000/-.

It has been pointed out by the officers of the Education Department that the advance in the efficiency of the teaching staff has not kept pace with the improvement in the buildings of these schools and the equipments of these schools are still very poor. But there cannot be any question that some improvement has been made. For vernacular instruction in these schools we find that in 1913-14 in 51 schools we had 74 trained teachers, whereas in 1916-17, in 79 schools we have 116 trained teachers. We are also gradually raising the standard of expenditure for these schools. The average monthly cost of maintaining a Middle English school in 1911-12 was only Rs. 67-8-0, in 1916-17 the cost is Rs. 128-8-0. Most of the Middle English schools have at least two Matriculates on their staff and the Head Master is either an Intermediate passed man or an experienced Matriculate. Besides the increase in the pay and qualifications of the teachers, steps have been taken to improve the furniture, maps, charts, library books and other appliances of these schools. During the last 3 years the District Board made special grants of about Rs. 2,200/- for this purpose alone. The local Managing Committees were also encouraged to take special interest in improving the equipment of schools. As a result we find that in the Gaibandha sub-division, for instance, 25 Middle English schools received additions of furniture, books and appliances.

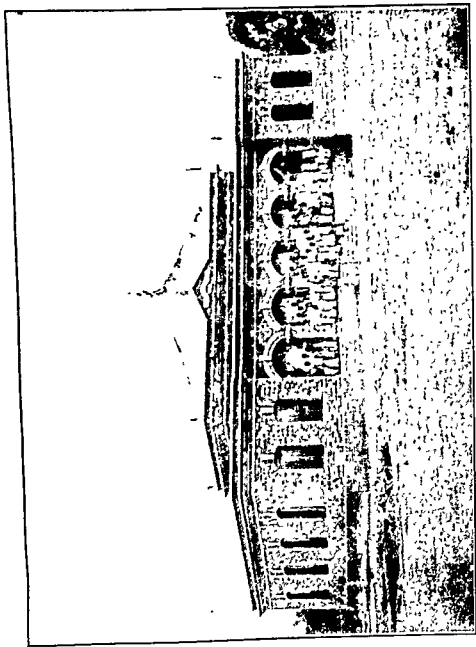
Efforts were also made to make instruction more practical in Middle English schools by the introduction of carpentry and agriculture in selected schools. Here again the lead has been taken by the Gaibandha sub-division, thanks to the keenness of the people for education and the keen interest which the last two Sub-Divisional Officers have taken in educational institutions. Carpentry has been introduced into 15 schools and gardening into 5 schools of the Gaibandha sub-division. In the Gajghanta Middle Vernacular school and a newly opened school at Pirgachha in the Sadar sub-division, and in the Kurigram Middle English

school and the Ghoriaidanga Middle English school in the Kurigram sub division and in the Domar Middle English school in the Nilphamari sub division, arrangements for instruction in carpentry and wood work have been made

Financial re The sources of income for Middle English schools
are —

- (1) Grants from the District Board
- (2) Grants from the Education Department of Government
- (3) Income from fees etc of the school
- (4) Private subscriptions and donations

As already stated the grant from the District Board in 1916 17 amounted to Rs 8360/ while it was only Rs 4,926/- in 1911 12. The grant from Government amounted to Rs 3820/ and 5/ per cent of the schools received aids. The number of schools is rapidly rising but not so the income of the District Board or the funds at the disposal of the Education Department. The rate of aid to Middle English schools from the District Board has now been reduced to Rs 20/ per month to permit such assistance going round as far as possible. But it is clear that very soon there will be a very rapid increase in the number of Middle English schools. Even if there be one school for each Union which in this district averages about 9 to 10 square miles, we shall have 359 such schools which means that there will be more than 4 times the existing number. This will result in the District Board grants being reduced to only about Rs 5/ per school unless in the meanwhile the District Board receives special additional grants for this purpose. Perhaps it will be necessary to divide the educational grants at the disposal of each Divisional Inspector amongst the districts according to their population and importance and leave the actual distribution to the District Board assisted by the District Deputy Inspector of Schools. As it is, the existing rules for the departmental recognition of Middle English schools the sanctioning of grants to them either by the District Board or the Education Department are somewhat inelastic. The Chairman of the District Board should have more



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power in these matters than he has at present, and it should be possible to make building grants to schools during the period of their struggle for existence and not after they have overcome all difficulties and actually established themselves. It is clear, however, that much substantial progress cannot be achieved without the people agreeing to contribute more freely for the Secondary Education of their boys than they do at present. This can be done in two ways. First, by substantially increasing the fee rate and secondly, by the imposition of an Education Tax. The justification for such a tax for Secondary Education is perhaps much stronger than for Primary Education.

59. In speaking of the popularity of Middle English schools, the unpopularity of purely vernacular teaching schools has also to be referred to. During the last Unpopular-ity of M. V. Schools quinquennium the number of vernacular teaching Middle schools decreased by 11, there being only 11 Middle Vernacular schools in 1916-17 in place of 22 in 1912-13. The same causes which are daily increasing the popularity of Middle English schools explains the unpopularity of Middle Vernacular schools. This point was brought to the notice of the Director in the Educational Conference of the district which was held in March 1914. It is pointed out by the officers of the Education Department that Middle Vernacular schools are necessary because they supply the students for our Normal schools. But the solution of the difficulty is to be found not by bolstering up institutions which are not appreciated by the people but by so modifying the curricula of our Guru Training schools so as to enable the teaching classes to be supplied by Middle English schools. In fact we will gradually have to adopt one type of Primary and one type of Middle schools only and so organize our District Training schools, the Guru Training and Normal schools as to be able to supply trained teachers for both types of schools.

60. In an important Educational Conference held in March 1914 which was attended by all the Sub-Divisional High schools Officers and educational officers of the district and was

presided over by the Director of Public Instruction, the educational needs of the district were discussed. The requirements of all the existing High schools of the district were carefully gone into, and it is a matter of congratulation that inspite of the unfortunate intervention of the War and the consequent dislocation of the financial resources of the department most of the improvements suggested at the conference have been carried out. During the last few years new school buildings according to a type plan prepared by the District Engineer of this District Board and sanctioned by the Superintending Engineer and the Department and costing on an average Rs. 30,000/- have been constructed, at Kurigram, Nilphamari and at Saidpur. For these three fine buildings the public has contributed handsomely. The need for a suitable building of the type plan was most pressing at Gaibandha. A scheme was prepared, land acquired and materials purchased for a new building about 3 years ago, but it had to be kept in abeyance for the want of a departmental grant. As the scheme could no longer be postponed it was decided this year to start the construction of the building relying on local resources alone. For this purpose Rs. 20,000/- have been collected in the sub-division and the foundation of the new college was laid by the Commissioner in last February. Unfortunately, not much progress has been made with the improvement of the Kailash Ranjan and the Tajhat High English schools. A scheme for the improvement of the Kailash Ranjan High English school is ready but is being held up for the want of a departmental grant. It is in other ways a most popular institution and there are more Muhammadan boys in this school than in the Government Zilla school at Rangpur. It is a matter of political expediency to bring this institution under closer official control, and put its management on a satisfactory footing. The Raja of Tajhat should also lose no time in improving the building and equipments of his High school. Only two new High schools have come into existence during the last 3 years, the Govindganj High school and the Gaibandha Islamia High school both in the Gaibandha sub-division. In the same sub-division

attempts are being made to gradually raise the Middle English school at Bushudebpur, Goomaniganj, and Tulshihat into High schools. But it is doubtful whether there is any real demand for High schools at any other place except the last.

Management of High schools.

61. Increased attention has been paid to the following points in connection with the management of the High schools of the district :—

- (1) Provision of suitable hostel accommodation.
- (2) Closer control over the life of the boys outside the school and in enlisting the co-operation of guardians for regulating discipline.
- (3) Greater attention to physical training and sports.
- (4) Introduction of manual training and agricultural training in schools.

With regard to the important question of providing suitable hostel accommodation for boys of High schools and discouraging boys from residing in unhealthy and undesirable surroundings, systematic efforts have been made to improve existing conditions. The hostel accommodation for the boys of the Government High school at Rangpur has been greatly enlarged. A fine block for Rajbanshis was completed in 1915 at a cost of Rs. 14,700/- for which the Rajbanshis themselves contributed Rs. 4,900/-. A scheme for a separate boarding house for the Muhammadan boys of the Zilla school is under consideration. In the meanwhile the existing Hare Moslem hostel where all the Muhammadan students of the town reside is being thoroughly repaired and improved. Of mofussal High schools the Nilphamari school is the best off for hostel accommodation. There are already two separate buildings for Hindus and Muhammadans, and the accommodation is being still further extended in both blocks at a rough cost of Rs. 10,000/-. The arrangements at Gaibandha are most unsatisfactory, but as soon as the new school building will be completed the existing school house will be utilized for a hostel. In the meanwhile temporary structures were erected last year for the accommodation of boys of school. In Kurigram the old school house is being utilized for

the residence of the boys. Connected with the question of the hostel accommodation is the general question of control. After the school hours the Sub Divisional Officers of the outlying sub divisions have attempted to introduce the Ward system and to place teachers in charge of each Ward. At headquarters the annual gathering of guardians has been taking place for the last 3 years, and the Head Master has instructions to keep himself in close touch with the guardians of the boys. During the last year the boys of the Zilla school have started a Magazine styled "The Bikash", and efforts are being made to make the Magazine independent of extraneous financial assistance.

All the Sub Divisional Officers take personal interest in the sports of their High schools and at Sadar there is a committee to look after the games of the boys. A rule has been passed in the Sadar Zilla school which makes it compulsory for the boys to join some form of sport. At first there was some objection from guardians to the above rule, but now the institution has become quite popular. The same rule should be introduced into all High schools. Besides the Divisional Cup for which the boys compete there are two local shields, the Hardinge Shield and the Tajhat Shield, for which tournaments are arranged for every year. Suitable play grounds are available in all the schools.

From the last two years all the boys of the Rangpur Zilla school have to attend carpentry classes in the Technical school for certain hours every week. The attendance at present is quite satisfactory. The Nilphamari High school has got a carpentry shed of its own and a specially trained teacher has been appointed to take up the carpentry class. The department has made a gift of necessary tools & plant. Manual training should be gradually introduced into all the High schools. There are special facilities at Saidpur for such training on account of the existence of the Railway workshops.

But although as above described some efforts have been made in improving the school life of the High schools yet it cannot be said any substantial results have been achieved or anything more than a

mere beginning has been made. The unhealthy surroundings of most schools, the entire absence of any means for influencing the daily life of the students and the absence of any organisations for appealing to their better instincts and emotions form the most noticeable drawbacks in the existing system of education. This point will be dealt with again in the concluding section under Education.

SECTION III.

PROGRESS OF FEMALE EDUCATION.

62. Along with other educational needs of the district the question of Female Education was discussed at the Conference in 1911 and the need of special institutions for girls was brought to the notice of the Director.

Progress of
Female Edu-
cation

During the last 4 years phenomenal progress has been made in the sphere of Female Education. The total number of Girls' schools has increased from 149 in 1913-14 to 447 in 1916-17. Thus there has been an increase of 298 schools and the number of girls attending these schools rose from 3,437 in 1913-14 to 9,173 at the end of the last official year. Thus the population of the schools has also more than doubled.

The amount of direct expenditure on Girls' schools from the District Fund rose from Rs. 6,360/- in 1913-14 to Rs. 16,122/- last year.

Along with the increase in the numerical strength of Girls' schools efforts were made :—

- (1) To improve the buildings, appliances and other equipments of Girls' schools.
- (2) To improve the teaching staff of the schools by the employment of mistresses as far as practicable.

The Sadar Girls' school has now been raised to the status of an M. E. school and a fine annexe has been added to the old

building for the lower classes This institution was lucky in having a special grant from Her Excellency Lady Carmichael for furniture and appliances which enabled the Committee to equip the school properly. The financial condition of the school has been somewhat embarrassed by the stoppage of the District Board grant on account of a technical difficulty. The matter is now under reference to the Director of Public Instruction.

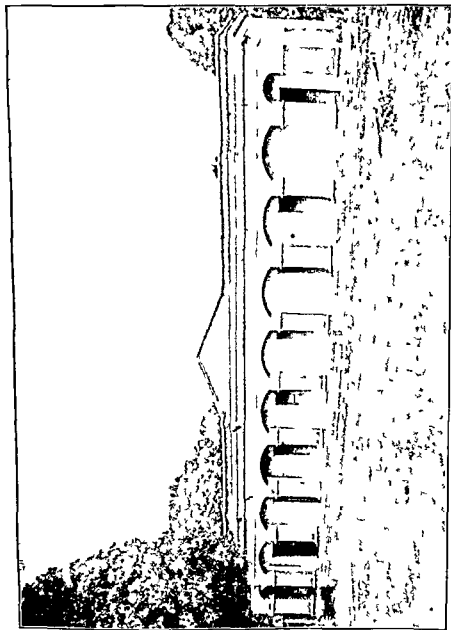
During the last 3 years a type of school building for accommodating 80 girls has been adopted and fine buildings have been erected at Kurigram, Ulipur, and Domar. A similar school has been laid down at Bhitband and the foundation of the Gaibandha Girls' school of a similar type was laid by Mrs Gupta in February this year. This District Board has made special building grants for 28 different Girls' schools in different part of the District.

Besides the schools at the headquarters of the district and sub-divisions the schools at Ulipur, Saidpur, Dimla, Gomnati and Kakina are flourishing institutions.

Mistresses are now employed at 29 different schools of which the most prominent institutions are the Sadar Girls' school, the sub-divisional Girls' schools at Nilphamari, Kurigram, and Gaibandha, and the schools at Domar, Saidpur and Kakina.

The following measures will be necessary to continue the progress of Female Education in the District :—

- (1) A very substantial increase of funds which are at present available for Female Education. The contributions of District Board and Government should be materially increased. Local bodies should be given powers of self-taxation for the purposes of developing Primary Education of girls.
- (2) There should be more Training schools for girl-teachers.
- (3) The curricula for Girls' schools of all classes should be carefully revised. The subjects of study should be made both more attractive and more for girls than is the case at present.



SARALA GIRLS SCHOOL KURIGRAM

- (4) The number of properly qualified Indian ladies should be gradually increased on the Inspecting Staff of Girls' schools.
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SECTION IV.

THE CARMICHAEL COLLEGE.

63. The Carmichael College has been established at Rangpur with the object of removing a long-felt want of the district and of Northern Bengal generally. It forms the apex of the educational institutions which have been established and the educational progress which has been achieved in the district during the last few years and its beneficent influence is bound to have far-reaching effects on the intellectual life of the whole district.

Initiation of the scheme
The idea of establishing a college at Rangpur was ventilated in the time of my predecessor Mr. K.C. De., C.I.E. who succeeded in getting a verbal promise of a donation of a lakh of rupees for the purpose from Rai Bahadur Annada Mohan Rai Choudhury of Tapa. In the address presented by the people of the district to His Excellency the Governor on the occasion of His Excellency's visit to the district in November 1913, the establishment of a college formed one of their most important prayers. In reply the Governor pointed out the difficulties which lay in the way of Government supporting any scheme for a fresh college in the Rajshahi Division, but deferred final decision till the question had been examined by the Director of the Public Instruction on the spot. Accordingly, in March 1914, the Director paid a visit to Rangpur and discussed the various aspects of the scheme with the representatives of the people and myself. The result of this conference was embodied by the Director in a Memorandum, dated the 19th March, 1914.

In that document the Director refers to the central position of this district in this division, the excellence of its railway com-

munication the general prosperity of the people the rapid growth of population the improvements of its health and the advance of high education in the district within recent years. It is also pointed out that there has been a great change in the district since the days of Sir Ashley Eden when the former Rangpur College had to be closed after a brief career of 2 or 3 years only. Great weight was rightly attached in the Memorandum to the special requirements of the Muhammadin and Rajbansi communities, which form the majority of the population of the district. The Memorandum also dwells upon the pressing need that exists for relieving the congestion of the Calcutta colleges, and points out that students of this district unless there is a college in Rangpur, are likely to go to Calcutta in preference either to Dacca or Rajshahi. Stress is laid on the fact that the proposed college will possess the great advantage of affording extensive residential facilities both for the students and the tutorial staff the ultimate aim of the Committee being to make the college a purely residential institution. Lastly, it is pointed out that an extensive site is available and the college would admit of future developments that might be necessary to keep pace with any possible advance in the system of University education in India.

The Director then addressed Government on the subject and in his letter No 7223 of the 31st June 1914 begged to be informed whether financial question apart Government were prepared to view with favour the establishment of a first grade college at Rangpur. In reply Government, in their letter No 454 T G of the 3rd August 1914 informed that in view of the great local enthusiasm for a college Government would be prepared to consider the question of recurring grant after the people succeed in raising 3 lakhs of rupees for the initial expenses of the scheme.

64 From the beginning the Executive Committee fully realised that the success of the scheme must depend very greatly if not wholly, on their ability to raise sufficient funds to make the scheme independent of extraneous financial assistance. Soon after the conference presided

Progress of
the scheme

over by the Director, a representative General Committee and an influential Executive Committee were formed for the collection of funds and for the furtherance of the scheme generally. A Board of Trustees consisting of the District Magistrate and Chairman of the District Board (*Ex-Officio*), Raja Gopal Lal Roy of Tajhat and Rai Bahadur Annada Mohan Rai Choudhury of Tepa was constituted in order that there might be a corporate legal body capable of holding property and receiving funds for the college. Committees and Sub-Committees were also formed throughout the district to help the central Committee in discharging its onerous duties.

It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the scheme had its birth in the promise of a lakh of rupees made by our public-spirited and generous zamindar and fellow-citizen Rai Bahadur Annada Mohan Rai Choudhury, whose munificence in all public matters is so well-known both to the Government Officials and to the people of the district. The Hon'ble Maharaja Sir Manindra Chandra Nandi of Cossimbazar and Raja Gopal Lal Roy of Tajhat, with their usual eagerness to help in a good cause, specially in any scheme for the advancement of education, readily came forward with munificent promise of half a lakh and a lakh of rupees respectively. The lesser zamindars of the district followed the lead so generously given, and the collection of subscriptions would have made rapid progress, had not unfortunately the disastrous European War broken out. The withering effects of this world-calamity affected all class of community, and the dislocation of the jute market fell heavily on the agriculturists, on whose prosperity that of all other classes so intimately depends. Hence for the remaining months of 1914 and practically till the end of the year 1915, the collection of subscriptions and all other efforts to further the scheme had to be suspended. Fortunately, however, the agricultural prosperity of the district revived in 1915 and the Committee again took up collection work in December last. Up to the end of February 1916, a sum of Rupees 1,05,143/- was collected, and on the 10th of November, when the foundation of the

college was laid, actual collections had already exceeded 4 lakhs of rupees

While taking steps to collect subscriptions, the Committee also applied themselves in earnest to the preparation of a scheme outlining the scope and requirements of the college. The original scheme, which provided for a first grade college affiliated both in Arts and Science, was prepared by the Committee with the assistance of Professor Das of the Dacca College and Babu Ashutosh Lahury, the retired District Engineer of this district. This scheme has been printed and still forms the basis of the modified schemes which have since been evolved. In this original scheme, provision was made for the accommodation of 600 students, instruction was to be given in 3 science subjects, viz, Physics, Chemistry and Botany and in Honours Course in English, Mathematics, History and Sanskrit. The syllabus outlined for the scheme required the services of 23 teachers, demonstrators and lecture assistants in addition to the Principal. The initial outlay on the scheme was estimated at Rs 5,00,000/ and the recurring expenditure on maintenance at Rs 60 000/ annually. As the annual income of the college from its own resources was estimated only Rs 40,000/- per annum, the scheme required an annual grant of Rs 20 000/- from Government to materialise. As, under the altered circumstances created by the War, it was recognised that it would be impossible for Government to render any financial assistance to the college, the original scheme had to be abandoned and a less ambitious scheme prepared which would be financially self contained, and which would require no assistance from Government either initial or recurring. The revised scheme provided instruction in Arts subjects up to the B A standard and of scientific subjects in Botany only up to the same standard. The total capital outlay was estimated at roughly 4 lakhs of rupees, and it was proposed that if 6 lakhs were collected 2 lakhs would be set free for investment to meet the recurring expenditure of the institution. The total annual expenditure was estimated Rs 45,000/ and the annual income at Rs 50,000/- and it was thus hoped that the college would be entirely self supporting.

65. A great portion of the necessary funds having been collected and a workable scheme having been prepared and approved by the educational authorities, His Excellency Lord Carmichael, the first Governor of Bengal, agreed to lay the foundation of the college and permit it to be named after him. Accordingly on the 10th of November, 1916, the foundation of the college was laid. The following extracts from the address read on the occasion will be of interest :—

“The Committee’s principal object in proposing a first grade college in Rangpur has been to establish a model educational institution in a portion of the presidency where its need is greatly felt and where exceptional opportunities exist for future expansion and development. The careful attention to detail which has been so characteristic a feature of this scheme from the very start will enable the promoters to avoid the defects of some of the existing institutions and to adopt all such improvements and reforms which have in recent years been recommended by experts as worthy of adoption. Great attention will therefore be paid to the creation of a suitable environment for the proposed college. A beautiful and spacious site measuring nearly 900 bighas is being acquired. It is free from all danger of physical and moral contamination, such as arises from proximity to an overcrowded city or to any other centre of unhealthy influences. As funds permit, the institution will be gradually converted into an entirely residential college. Professors and students alike will live within the precincts of the college and it is hoped that a healthy social and intellectual life will thus be created amongst them and that a commendable *esprit-de-corps* will spring up, with all those stimulating influences that shape the life and character of the young students of the residential Universities of England. The greatest care will also be taken to make adequate provision for the physical training of the students. With some improvements, the natural water-course that skirts the western boundary of the college ground, will afford unique facilities

for aquatic pastimes and will form a modest substitute for those incomparable recreations which are afforded by the river in the great sister universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Discipline and corporate social life will be the chief ideals of the new institution, and it is the unanimous and the strong opinion of the Trustees and the members of the Executive Committee that the Governing Body of the college should be selected in close consultation with the Director and that the future management of the college should be on the lines of Government educational institutions. Though we have loyally accepted the final decision of Government regarding financial aid yet I hope your Excellency will permit me in this connection to observe that the task of the Committee in giving practical shape to their laudable desires will be greatly facilitated if Government will as soon as circumstances permit lend the services of a capable member of the Indian Educational service either European or Indian to take charge of the college. The Committee fully realise that the efficiency and the discipline of the college will greatly depend upon the educationist who may be selected to be its Principal. They are also aware that it will not be possible to secure the services of a really able man without offering him adequate remuneration. This unfortunately with the resources at our command we are unable to give. Without any intention therefore of asking for a definite promise I consider that I should be failing in my duty if I did not raise this important point regarding the future of the institution and make an earnest prayer that the matter may receive the favourable consideration of your Excellency's Government.

'Your Excellency in my final report to Government I took the liberty of pointing out that the proposed scheme is a unique example of the growing spirit of self help amongst the educated classes of Indians and the co ordination of all classes and communities for the benefit of their high education and I venture to observe that as such it richly deserved the support and encouragement of Government.'

The following extracts from His Excellency's reply will also

be of great interest, "It is just three years since I visited your town and district for the first time. You told me then in your address of welcome of your aspirations to have collegiate education at your own doors and I promised that Mr. Hornell, whom I am glad to see with us to-day, should examine your scheme and report on it to Government. These three years have not been wasted, and, when I think of the magnitude of the scheme and the difficulties which had to be overcome, I heartily congratulate Mr. Gupta, the Board of Trustees and the various Committees on the success of their endeavours and the attainment, in part at least, of their ambitions. The outbreak of the War was indeed a sad blow. The dislocation of trade and the restrictions of both public and private finances which it caused, would have deterred most people, at least for a time, from persevering even in so laudable an object. But your enthusiasm has carried you beyond these difficulties. Mr. Samman has told me that the scheme has aroused a local enthusiasm such as I do not remember, ever before, to have seen displayed over any educational or other schemes in any district in the Presidency."

"Rangpur is favourably situated for collegiate teaching. The district is now well served by Railways and the town is, I am told, much healthier than it was 25 or 30 years ago. The only other first grade colleges in Northern Bengal are those at Cooch-Bihar and Rajshahi. There seems, therefore, to be every reason for hoping that the college will lessen the stream of students which pours every year into the already over-flowing student area of Calcutta. I can well believe that the people of Rangpur appreciate the possibility of obtaining college education for their sons nearer home, away from the temptations and dangers of a great, and to many of them an unknown city. This site too, is spacious and healthy and offers every facility for development."

"The ideal you have set before you is a high one, a model college entirely residential where professors and students will live and enjoy a healthy physical, social, and intellectual life. Keep that ideal before you and do not let the glamour of a wider affiliation

than you can afford tempt you from it Do not relax your efforts, but concentrate them on the attainment of your ideal with the affiliation you at present aim at. Your funds do not as yet permit you to build the whole of the hostels which will be necessary. I am glad, by the way, to learn that the District Board have promised you assistance in this matter, but concentrate your resources on making this institution really a model residential college. What Mr. Gupta has said about the loan of a member of the Indian Educational Service for the post of Principal shall certainly not be forgotten. I wish it were possible for Government to help you in this matter at the present time, but it is not. Much will depend on the choice of the Principal and inspite of what you say regarding his remuneration, I trust you may be able to obtain the services of a first class man willing to give his service to his country in the supervision of the training of her sons".

Though somewhat anticipating the chronological sequence of the narrative we might mention here that through the good services of the Reverend Mr. Woollard, our local Baptist Missionary, the college has been fortunate enough to secure the services of Dr. Watkins, B.A. (Oxon), M.A. (London), and D.TH. (Heidelberg), whose unique educational qualifications and personal character are likely to make him an ideal Principal and a great acquisition to the college.

66. In the beginning of the present year a society was formed under the title of the "Committee of the Carmichael College, Rangpur". A Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations were drawn up and printed and the society was registered under Act XXI. of 1860. The Articles of Association provide that the Governing Body of the college will consist of not less than nine but not more than eleven members, of which—

1. One shall be the District Magistrate and Collector of Rangpur (*Ex-Officio*).
2. One shall be the District Judge of Rangpur (*Ex-Officio*).

Registration
of the Com-
mittee of the
Carmichael
College under
Act XXI. of
1860

3. One shall be Mr. J. N. Gupta, M.A., I.C.S., Bengal, for his life.
4. One shall be the Senior Deputy Collector of Sadar, Rangpur (*Ex-Officio*).
5. One shall be the Principal for the time being of the Carmichael College (*Ex-Officio*).
- 6 & 7. Not more than two shall be elected from amongst the teaching staff of the Carmichael College, Rangpur.
8. One shall be Raja Gopal Lal Roy of Tajhat for his life.
9. One shall be Rai Bahadur Annada Mohan Rai Choudhury for his life.
- 10 & 11. At least two shall be elected by the other members of the society from amongst the members of the said society, one being a Hindu and the other a Muhammadan.

The existing Governing Body does not contain the members of items, 4, 5 and 6, who will not be available until the college has started work. The Articles also provide that the property, movable and immovable, belonging to the society shall be vested for the time being in the Governing Body of the college, and the management of the business and affairs of the society shall be vested in the same body.

67. In the meanwhile at the earnest and pressing desire of the people of the district to have the college started at the earliest possible opportunity, sanction of the District Board was obtained to make use of the new District Board building for the college till the college buildings are ready and an application was submitted to the Senate in October, 1916, for the affiliation of the college in the following subjects:—

1. INTERMEDIATE IN ARTS.

1. English. 2. Vernacular (Bengali, Urdu). 3. Sanskrit.
4. Arabic. 5. Persian, 6. Mathematics. 7. History.
8. Logic. 9. Botany.

2 BACHELOR IN ARTS

A—Pass

- 1 English 2 Vernacular (Bengali, Urdu) 3 Sanskrit
 4 Persian 5 Arabic 6 History 7 Mathematics
 8 Philosophy 9 Economics and Political Philosophy
 10 Botany

B—Honours

- 1 English 2 Mathematics 3 History 4 Sanskrit
 5 Persian

The University appointed Mr Turner, Assistant Director of Education, Mr Das Gupta of the Presidency College and Principal Bose of the Bangabasi College as Inspectors, and these educationists after paying a visit to Rangpur submitted a report to the Syndicate recommending strongly the affiliation of the college.

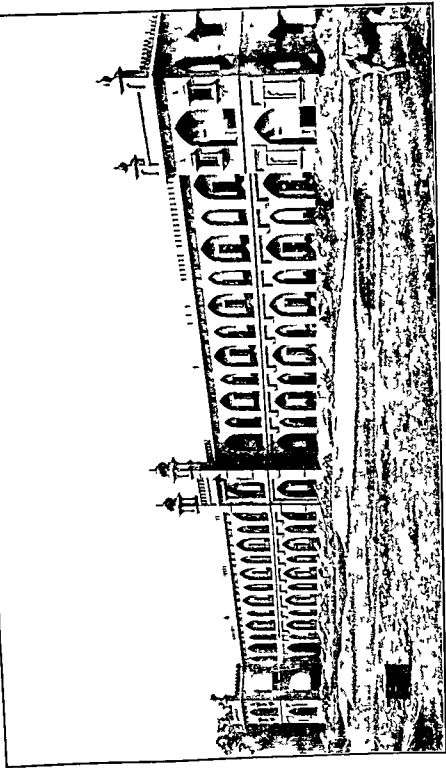
In their report the Inspectors observe "The scheme is admirable. Every facility will be given for the development of collegiate life in healthy surroundings at a distance from the bazar, with students and professors living in close proximity and having common interests." Affiliation was granted by the University in all the subjects upto the B A pass standard except in Botany.

A fresh application has been made to the University for affiliation up to I A in Botany, and Principal G C Bose has again paid a visit to the college and submitted a report. It has however, been decided not to press the point till the next session in July 1918.

68 The Carmichael College was opened in its temporary abode on the 9th of July last. Since its opening

Opening of the College over 400 students have already joined the college.

A staff of 12 Professors and Lecturers including a Vice Principal have been appointed. Most of the senior Professors have 1st Class or A degrees. Dr Watkins joined early in November. The construction of the buildings in connection with the college is being pushed on as fast as possible. One block of the hostel buildings for 100 students and 2 Superintendents is already complete and fit for occupation. The main college itself is expected to be ready by February. It is the ambition of



CARMICHAEL COLLEGE HOSTEL
(Block No 1)

the Governing Body to have the new buildings of the college opened by His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay as its foundation was laid by his predecessor. Up to now a sum of Rs. 5,57,115/- has already been collected and a sum of Rs. 1,19,000/- is expected to be collected during the present year and the next. But a sum of Rs. 3,51,000/- has already been expended including the amount of Rs. 1,75,380/- invested in War Loans. The expenses in connection with the construction of the building has greatly exceeded the original estimates on account of the War and the recurring expenditure has also been much greater than was anticipated on account of the increase in the pay of the Principal, Vice-Principal and some of the other Professors of the staff. Accordingly an application has been made to the Director for a capital grant for the construction of the remaining hostels of the college which alone will cost nearly 4 lakhs of rupees.

69. The point to which the attention of the Governing Body will have to be concentrated in the immediate future is the construction of more barracks for the boys and quarters for the staff. Schemes are ready to suit different scales of expenditure and as soon as arrangements are made for more funds the work of construction will be vigorously pushed forward. It is hoped that most of these buildings will be completed by the end of June next. A good deal of work will have to be done in the meanwhile in levelling and laying out the extensive compound, in removing the Lalbag Hat, in reclaiming the jhill, in making fresh alignments of the District Board roads, which now run through the compound and in metalling the road connecting the college with the town.

The establishment of the co-operative institutions mentioned in the syllabus viz, a stationery shop, a grocer's shop, a book shop, and a dairy and garden which has just been sanctioned by the Governing Body, will also require a good deal of labour and organisation. It is satisfactory that a start has already been made with the grocery, and the stationery and book-shop.

After these schemes have been sufficiently advanced the next

step would be to collect additional funds for the construction of the science block and the opening of the science section of the college, simultaneously the installation of electric power for lighting etc., installation for water supply etc will have to be provided for. But it is confidently anticipated that financial assistance from Government both for capital and recurring expenditure will be forthcoming as soon as the financial stringency caused by the War is over to enable the Committee to complete a scheme which they have so well begun. The addition of an industrial side to the college is also a part of the future programme of the institution.

SECTION V

EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

70 The problem of education in modern India is to develop a system which will be capable of great expansion without deviating from a definite standard of efficiency and discipline which will make provision for the financing of such a costly and ever expanding system without throwing too heavy a burden directly on the recipients of the education, and lastly which will safeguard that the education imparted conforms to the actual surroundings of the students and is in touch with the actual conditions of their lives. I think it would be a correct estimate of the present position to say that the *chief impediments to the progress of education in the country* are the want of sufficient financial resources for the proper maintenance and development of educational institutions, the want of suitable environments for the student both in his life at school and college and in his after life, and to some extent the want of harmony in the views of those most concerned in the progress of education in the country and the consequent lack of co operation and fruitful energy.

General
review of the
situation

From a political point of view there is no department of the District Administration so important as Education and the guidance and training of the youths of the country, and as a rule the District Officer is able to give this department very little attention. The Education Department is also not able to be very much in touch with the life and environments of the ever increasing number of boys who are receiving education at the ill-equipped and badly managed schools in mofussal areas. There is hardly any social life amongst the students, there is not much discipline and practically no guidance. The environments of school life are unsatisfactory in every sense of the term, and the opening for youths who receive education at our schools and colleges are getting more restricted every day. In these conditions it is not a matter of surprise that there is wide-spread discontent, and the invasion of crude and even anarchical and criminal ideas amongst the student community. Far sighted and comprehensive action is necessary to improve the present unsatisfactory state of affairs. It is not only that the youth of to-day, are the citizens of tomorrow, but the whole political atmosphere of the country is bound to be affected by the sentiments and views of those who are receiving education in our schools and colleges.

71. Into the larger questions raised by the above issues it is ^{Line of} not necessary to enter at any length here. It is ^{progress.} sufficient to note that in this district attention has been concentrated on the following points :—

- (i) In inducing the people to render financial assistance to their local educational institutions and arranging that they should take charge of the management of their local schools as far as is compatible with the existing rules of official supervision and management.
- (ii) In providing for close co-operation and co-ordination between the officers of the General Department and the Education Department and the District Board in the educational administration of the District.
- (iii) In improving the surroundings of the life of the

students in school and college by the provision of hostels and by providing greater facilities for healthy recreation

72 As to how far it has been possible to arouse local enthusiasm for education and for educational institutions has been dwelt upon in the previous sections. The following table gives an abstract of the financial contribution of the people for educational institutions during the last 4 years

Rangpur College	7½ lakhs
High schools	2 lakhs
Middle and Primary schools of boys and girls	1 lakh
Total	10½ lakhs

Besides the practical proof which the people have given of their keenness and anxiety for the improvement of their educational institutions by the contribution of such substantial financial assistance it is abundantly clear that amongst the better classes of both sections of the community, both Hindu and Muhammadan, there is no longer any lack of enthusiasm for education or the want of the desire to initiate educational schemes, but on the contrary our task now is more to control and guide local enthusiasm into proper channels than to whet their desire for education

73 The following suggestions are made for the improvement of the educational administration of a district

- (i) Close co operation between the officers of the General Department, the Education Department and the public. Education is perhaps one of the most important departments of the administration of the district and its importance is daily growing. Both the Decentralisation Commission and the District Administration Committee dwell upon the desirability of this department being brought under the closer control of the District Officer. In order to enable the

District Officer to exercise greater control over this department he should have an educational assistant. The present District Deputy Inspector of Schools is of very little assistance to him, as besides being in charge of the educational work of the district this officer is also directly in charge of the educational institutions of the Sadar. We should have a Sadar Deputy Inspector of Schools for the Sadar Sub-Division and a District Inspector of Schools for the district. Similarly the Sub-Divisional Officer should be given definite powers in educational matters. It will be distinct improvement if the tour diaries of Deputy Inspectors and of Sub-Inspectors of Schools pass through Sub-Divisional Officers. At present the supervision exercised by the subordinate inspecting agency of the Education Department over educational institutions is not quite satisfactory. The granting of some definite powers to Sub-Divisional Officers will not only stimulate the interest of Sub-Divisional Officers in educational institutions but will also make the people realize that in educational matters also the officers who are most in touch with their daily lives have a commanding voice.

- (ii) The annual educational programme of the district should be fixed at a conference, which should be attended by the Inspector of Schools, all the educational officers of the district, the Sub-Divisional Officer and the Collector who may preside. Such an annual conference has been advised by Government, but full advantage has not yet been taken of the instructions on the subject. The following subjects should be decided at this conference :—
 - (a) The departmental recognition of schools.
 - (b) The allocation of recurrent grants to different schools

from District Board funds and the Departmental funds

- (c) The allocation of capital grants to schools from the Department and from the District Board funds
- (d) Decision about the personnel of managing committees and other questions regarding the management of schools
- (iii) Greater powers should be given to this District Board in educational matters, and the Board should be made responsible for the management of all primary and secondary schools in the district. The existing rules defining the relations of the District Board with the Education Department should be modified. As the present policy is to give the District Board larger financial powers, the Chairman should have the authority to make grants to schools after consulting the Inspector of Schools and the District Board grants should not be dependant on the decision of the Inspector as they are now

- 74** Much time is now wasted in sending up recommendations to the Inspector's office about recognition, grants etc. There is not much method in the existing procedure which besides being very dilatory depends a great deal on the individual impression of the Inspecting Officers. It will be a great advantage if all applications were to be received up to certain date and if they were to be decided in the district concerned in the presence of the Secretaries of Schools, the Sub-Divisional Officers, the Deputy Inspectors of Schools, and other officers who have first hand local knowledge.

Annual District Education Conference

The money available for each Inspector's division should be allocated to different districts beforehand. The money available for different educational objects from the District Board should also be fixed beforehand. The money should then be distributed at the Conference as suggested above. In this district during the last 4 years Educational Conferences have been regularly held and

all important questions regarding the management and needs of different educational institutions discussed and settled at these Conferences

75 As regards the question of improving the environment of students and affording them greater scope for the free development of their mental and emotional faculties and encouraging a spirit of *esprit de corps* amongst them it might be said that besides the improvement of the hostel arrangements of schools and the inauguration of a residential college, a carefully prepared scheme for the formation of an Association amongst the students of Rangpur has been placed before the Education Department. It is hoped that the scheme will provide a powerful antidote to the corroding influence of anarchical and irresponsible ideas amongst the students of the district. It need hardly be explained that the discipline and corporate life which this scheme expects to provide is not in conflict with the discipline which might be provided in individual institutions but will supplement any work on the same lines which might be taken up in individual schools and colleges, while giving it a more comprehensive and attractive background. The following extracts from the scheme may prove of interest —

76 ‘ The object of this Association is to promote feelings of brotherhood and comradeship among the students of this district, and to inculcate among them a spirit of loyalty to the King and country and respect for their superiors. The appreciation and pursuit of true social and ethical ideals and ideals of Literature and Art and a practical study of the actual environments of their life will also form other important items in the programme of the Association.

77. Each member of the Association will be expected to sign the following Articles of Association —

- (1) That I plight my wholehearted allegiance to the ancient Indian injunction of loyalty to the King, service to the motherland and love and obedience

to our parents and to our teachers in schools and colleges

- (2) I firmly believe that the best way of serving the country is to take full advantage of the opportunities available in the existing order of things, while striving for a still further widening of the gates of life for the youth of the country by our patient industry, moderation, good will, and devotion to duty
- (3) I entertain feelings of the deepest abhorrence and detestation for all anarchical and criminal associations and their methods as being unmanly, cowardly, immoral and unpatriotic, and disastrous to the best interests and future progress of the country, and opposed to the venerated traditions of Hindus and Muhammadans alike. I solemnly pledge myself to do everything in my power to thwart the designs and work of all such individuals and societies
- (4) I realize the importance and desirability of cultivating cordial and brotherly relationship with all classes of the student community, Hindus and Muhammadans, respect for my teachers both Indians and Europeans and pledge to do my best to cultivate such feelings
- (5) I pledge to discard all social customs which are inimical to the laws of health and social science and which are obstacles in the path of social progress
- (6) I realize the supreme importance of the industrial development of the country and I promise to qualify myself, so far as practicable, by undergoing manual and industrial training to take my due share in the industrial revival of the country
- (7) I agree to carry out to the best of my ability, any instructions and rules of conduct and action laid down by the authority of the Executive Committee of the Association

78. The Committee of the Association will arrange to have an annual gathering of a limited number of members from each of the institutions affiliated to the Society.

The annual gathering will be held during the X'mas holidays each year at Rangpur. The following will be the chief items in the programme of the annual gathering :—

- (1) There should be an outdoor and indoor department of the functions of the Annual Conference. There should be two separate committees to arrange the two different departments.
- (2) An address by some well-known Educationist or Literary celebrity on a suitable subject should be arranged for. The subject and the speaker for the year will be selected by the Managing Committee a few months in advance.
- (3) There should be speech-day for the students when the best two essays in English and the best two essays in Bengali for the junior and the senior branches respectively, should be read by the writers of the essays. The subject of the essays should be fixed by the Committee a year in advance and should be examined by a Professor of the college, to be selected each year. There should be prizes for the four essays.
- (4) One afternoon should be reserved for the discussion of economic and industrial subjects
- (5) Another afternoon should be reserved for the discussion of social subjects
- (6) Arrangement should be made for sports of different kinds. Tournaments for Tennis, Badminton and Hockey etc, should also be arranged.
- (7) There should be an Amateur Dramatic Society connected with the Association and a Bengali and English play should be staged by the Society during the gathering.

79 Besides the annual gathering of students the Association will organize a scheme which will provide facilities for the continuous guidance of the life and conduct of the students in healthy useful channels in co ordination with and as supplementary to the rules and instructions of the educational institutions to which the students belong. The working Committee of the Association will be in charge of this permanent work connected with the organisation.

There will be the following departments of work in connection with this part of the scheme —

(1) *Emergency work*

Students of the Association will be expected to do honorary and unselfish work to mitigate suffering caused either by any visitation of Nature such as floods fire etc, or by the widespread failure of crops resulting in scarcity or famine. They shall also be expected to render every assistance in attending the sick and the afflicted and in cremating the dead where their assistance will be needed.

(2) *Social work*

A member of the Association will be expected

- (a) Not to marry till he has finished his education and attains 25 years of age
- (b) Not to marry a lady who in age education and other qualifications, is not likely to be a suitable companion of his life
- (c) Not to accept any dowry as a consideration for marriage
- (d) To help in every way to relax the difficulties of existing marriage laws

(3) *Economic and Industrial work*

Every student joining the Association should realize the value of manual labour and manual training and should join one or other of the co operative shops and work-shops which will be organized by the Society, and which will be worked and managed

entirely by members of the Association. The following forms of industry on co-operative principles are recommended —

- (a) A carpentry shop for supplying the furniture of the school or college and for supplying any local demand that there may be for articles manufactured in the workshop
- (b) A tailoring establishment on co-operative principles to make the clothes of the students of the school or college and also for the supply of outside local demand
- (c) An oilman's stores for the supply of the necessary articles of food generally to be had at *Modi's* shops. This shop may cater entirely for the needs of the boarding houses attached to the college and school.

The idea underlying the above schemes is that all students should learn the value of manual industry and acquire business habits by actual experience. All poor students should also have facilities for earning by their own industry the means for the prosecution of their studies instead of relying on charity and extraneous assistance. In Scotland and in America poor students do not hesitate to earn the money necessary for their education by doing even menial duties.

(1) *Concentration of attention to their own native villages*

Every student of the Association must consider it his primary duty to devote all his energies whenever he has an opportunity to improve his native village.

The improvement of sanitation and sources of water supply, the improvement and maintenance of the village schools, discouragement of *dala lathies* in the village should all receive his special attention. The influence of educated young men specially if there is combination amongst them is of appreciable weight in regulating the life of a village and during the long vacation students have ample opportunity of doing practical good on the lines indicated above. He may for instance easily spend one or two hours every day in helping the local *guru* to teach the boys of

the village schools and in organizing games and sports for the village boys and also take part in them.

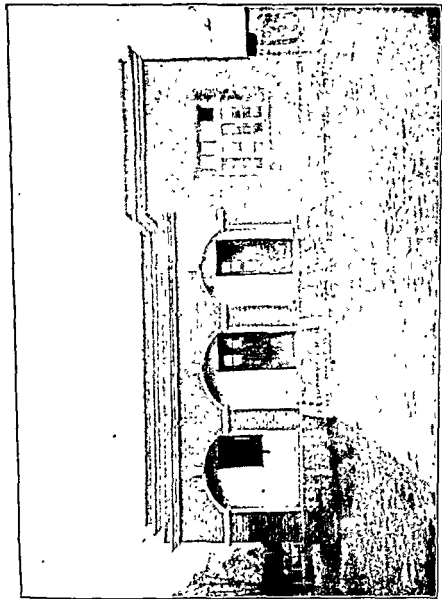
(5) *Programme for utilization of vacations.*

As noted above, vacations between the terms of schools and colleges ought to afford special opportunities for doing useful work by the students both in their own villages and in towns where they may be spending their holidays. The Association will try to arrange for recess lectures for the benefit of the students whenever they will be in sufficiently large numbers at any centre to take full advantage of the lectures. The University recess lectures of Oxford and Cambridge should be the models to be followed. In their turn the students themselves might make tours in the interiors of districts to important villages and deliver a course of lectures on either historical or other useful and practical subjects, such as village sanitation and village health.

(6) *Travels.*

There is almost an entire absence of this important source of instruction in the educational programme of this Presidency and in India generally. It will be the duty of the Association to organize suitable excursions during holidays for definite objects, under charge of specially selected professors or teachers. Walking tours during the winter vacation in charge of a teacher or professor should also be organized.

As regards the scheme for the Rangpur Association, of students, it is satisfactory that the Carmichael College Committee has already accepted it as a working basis and a co-operative stores and a stationery shop have already been started in connection with the college. An early opportunity will be taken to have a gathering of the students on the lines of the above scheme.



NALDANGA RURAL DISPENSARY.

CHAPTER VII.

PROGRESS OF SANITATION AND MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS.

80. Till quite recently the district enjoyed a very unenviable notoriety for its unhealthy climate and the Bengali *sobriquet* for Rangpur used to be *Jampur* or "the abode of death." Thanks however to the gradual increase in the material prosperity of the district, the general raising of its surface by the great earthquake of 1897, and the improvement of the drainage of the town carried out by Dr. K. D. Ghosh and Mr. H. F. Skrine, a former Collector of the district, the health of the town and of the district generally has greatly improved. In 1914, the Provincial Sanitary Report showed the district to be the healthiest in the Rajshahi Division and the mean ratio of deaths per thousand of population for the previous 5 years was 30.56, which was lower than that of any other district in the division. The death rate for 1914, however, was 32.42 per thousand of population, while the birth rate was 38.31 per thousand of population. But unfortunately, there was a marked set-back in 1915 and the death rate rose to 40.90 per mile, being one of the heaviest in Bengal, while the birth rate for the year was only 31.45. There was an improvement again in 1916 and the death rate fell to 31.75 per thousand, the mean ratio for the previous 5 years being 31.39, still the lowest in the Division except Bogra. The birth rate in 1916 was however rather poor being only 20.22 per thousand. The ratio of deaths of Muhammadans seems to be slightly higher than that of Hindus. In 1915, the ratio for Hindus was 39.17 against 41.99 for the Muhammadans, during last year the ratio for Hindus was 30.98 while that of the

Muhammadians was 32.37. Taking the interior of the district excluding the towns fever was responsible for 35.77 deaths per thousand of the population in 1915 out of a total death rate of 41.08, and in 1916 the same cause was responsible for 29.85 deaths out of a total of 31.19 per thousand of population. Deaths from epidemics like cholera and small pox are quite negligible the ratio for small pox in 1915 being .09 and .13 for 1916, whereas for cholera the ratio for 1915 was 3.47 and for 1916 only .75 per thousand of population.

Lines of improvement 81. The means which might be adopted for improving the health and sanitary condition of the district would appear to be the following —

- (1) The establishment of dispensaries at reasonable distances for affording cheap, if not free medical relief to the inhabitants
- (2) The adoption of special measures for combating malarial and other kinds of fever which are mainly responsible for the high mortality of the district, and also other means for dealing with outbreaks of epidemics of cholera, small pox etc.
- (3) The adoption of measures for carrying out of works of rural sanitation including the improvement of the supply of drinking water through the agency of village institutions, and for spreading the knowledge of sanitary principles amongst the people.

It is needless to add that the general improvement of the material condition of the people is perhaps the most potent means of improving their standard of living and of their health, but this can hardly be dealt with as a part of the programme of sanitary improvement. But nevertheless it is important to remember that the basic fact in connection with the improvement of the health of the rural population is the problem of the improvement of their general well being and advance in their standard of living and their knowledge of the laws of hygiene and their ability to live up to their enhanced knowledge.

82. The source from which money may be available for the improvement of sanitation and health of the district is

Sources of
income for
medical im-
provement.

almost entirely the general income of the District Board. There is only one Municipality at the headquarters of the district, but even for the Sadar dispensary and hospital the District Board has to find the major portion of the funds required for its maintenance. Luckily, the augmentation of the resources of the District Board by the subvention of the Public Works Cess has enabled the Board to materially increase its expenditure on medical relief. The total medical expenditure of the District Board rose from only Rs. 21,166/- in 1912-13 to Rs. 41,918/- in 1916-17, and the average annual expenditure during the last 3 years on this head has been Rs. 48,708/-. The percentage of medical expenditure on ordinary income of the District Board was over 10, which is one of the heaviest of any District Board in the Province. But even though the District Board has more than doubled its expenditure on medical relief, yet it would not have been possible to make anything like adequate provision for medical relief if the people of the district had not, in this as in all other important departments of the administration, come forward with most generous contributions and co-operated whole-heartedly with the authorities for the gradual extension and maintenance of medical institutions. During the last 4 years, on an average 2 new dispensaries have been started every year. For each new dispensary the people of the locality concerned have found the building site, contributed on an average Rs. 1,000/- for the building and promised a substantial monthly contribution. Private zamindars own some of the best medical institutions in the district. The Sadar dispensary and hospital owes its origin to the generosity of the Kundi zamindars. The Maharaja of Cossimbazar has a thoroughly well-appointed and upto date dispensary at Ulipur, and the Raja of Kakina opened an indoor ward of his dispensary in 1915. The important system of canals draining the town were almost wholly financed by private contributions, the late Raja of Dimla being the principal

contributor towards the Skriné Canal. But it is not only the richer people who help medical and sanitary schemes by their insolated and periodic acts of generosity. The entire mass of the people of the district regularly pay small voluntary contributions, through their Panchayets for the support of their medical institutions and these panchayeti collections form one of the most valuable sources of income of all dispensaries in the district.

Medical Institutions 83. Regarding medical institution the policy followed has been,

- (1) To gradually increase the number of dispensaries, by opening dispensaries in quarters where medical institutions were most wanted and where the people evinced the most practical zeal in helping themselves.
- (2) To improve the buildings and the appliances of existing dispensaries.
- (3) To help private dispensaries by giving suitable aid to them, and by assisting private practitioners according to a special scheme which however has had to be abandoned.

At present the medical institutions of the district are distributed as follows :—

Class III. (Municipal)	...	...	2
Class III. (District Board)	..		26
Class IV. (District Board Aided)*		..	3
Class V. (Private)	...	.	9
Total			...
			40

There are the following institutions.—

1. Rangpur Sadar Hospital (Municipal). 2. Mahigonj (Municipal). 3. Kund (District Board). 4. Madanpur (District Board). 5. Mithapukur (District Board). 6. Belgari (District Board). 7. Pirgunj (District Board). 8. Gangachara (District Board). 9. Hatibandha (Aided) 10. Saptana (Aided). 11. Kakina (Private). 12. Tushbandar (Private). 13. Kutubpur (Private).

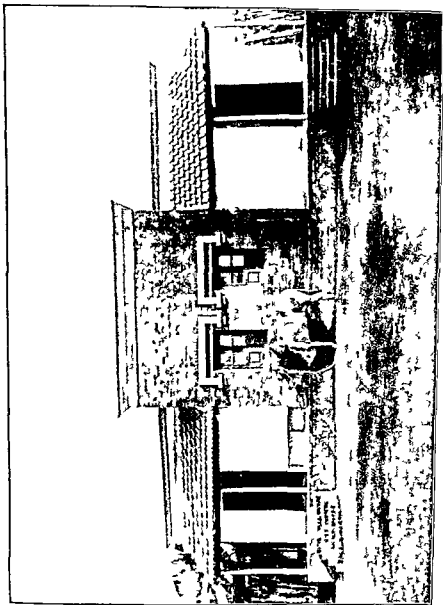
prepared for adding 10 more dispensaries during the next 5 years at the following places —

<i>Sadar</i>		<i>Kurigram</i>	
1	Kaunta	1	Fulbari
2	Pirgachha	2	Bagur
3	Dilalpur		<i>Nilphamari</i>
	<i>Garbandha</i>	1	Gomnati
1	Fulchari	2	Nautara
2	Kamdira	3	Saidpur

When this programme will have been carried out the district will have a total of 50 dispensaries and hospitals and each dispensary will on an average afford relief to 47,378 inhabitants over an area of 69.69 square miles. This will be as close an approach as the present resources of the District Board would permit to have "a network of medical institutions all over the district" as has been laid down in the recent circular of Government, No 273 T M dated the 18th September 1917, which the Rangpur District Board had however set up as its model 1 year ago.

84. As regards buildings and equipment, the District Board has adopted a standard type of a pucca building for mofussal dispensaries which costs Rs 4500/- in round figures. The plinth area of the building is 1002 square feet. It contains 4 rooms and two verandahs. The 4 rooms are—an operation room, a compounding room, a consulting room, and a female waiting room. During the last 4 years 13 dispensaries including the new ones have been provided with buildings of this type. For these buildings the District Board has spent Rs 48,000/ and the public have contributed Rs 9,050/. All the District Board dispensaries of the district have now been provided with up to date implements and equipments. Experienced Civil Surgeons have expressed the opinion that the dispensaries of this district compare favourably with similar institutions in any other part of this Province.

The manner in which the buildings, equipment, and surroundings of medical institutions have been improved in recent years



VETERINARY DISPENSARY GAIBANDA

will be exemplified by an account of the improvements effected in connection with the Sadar dispensary and hospital during the last 4 years. In 1913-14 the grounds in front of the Sadar dispensary were improved and laid out into a park at a cost of Rs. 2,100/-. In 1914 the Phthisical Ward and Low Caste Wards were constructed at a cost of Rs. 5,190/-. In 1915 the old Surgical Ward was dismantled and practically renewed and new operation and sterilising rooms were added, the total cost of the two improvements being Rs. 1,700/-. In the same year the Lady Doctor's quarters were improved, two additional latrines and compounder's quarters were erected, the total expenditure for these improvements coming up to Rs. 2,294/-. In the same year also the compounding and the office rooms of the dispensary were enlarged and improved at a cost of Rs. 1,451/-. During the present year the Medical Ward has been reconstructed on the lines of the improvements made to the Surgical Ward at a cost of Rs. 5,300/-, and verandahs have been added to the Phthisical Ward at a cost of Rs. 2,000/-. A Dysentery Ward erected for Rs. 965/-. the servants' quarters improved and miscellaneous improvements effected at a cost of Rs. 1,200/-. During this year a paying patients' Ward styled the 'Nripendra Narayan Ward' was also constructed at a cost of Rs. 6,000/-. So altogether during the last 4 years a sum of Rs. 35,280/- has been spent in improving and equipping the Sadar dispensary and hospital which is intended to be a model for the other medical institutions of the district. Out of this sum His Excellency the Governor made grants of Rs. 5,615/-, the Bengal Government paid Rs. 3,100/-, the Divisional Commissioner granted Rs. 3,950/- and private donation of Nripendra Narayan Roy amounted to Rs. 6,000/-. The District Board has already made contributions to the extent of Rs. 13,529/- and will have to make a further grant of another Rs. 1,000/- to clear up dues. The Municipality has failed to make any contribution although a grant of Rs. 1,000/- has been promised.

During 1915-16 a new dispensary building was erected at Gaibandha at a cost of Rs. 8,600/-.

85. With regard to the problem of multiplying facilities for medical relief of the people, it is observed that it is an expensive method for the District Board to have to start and maintain dispensaries in every case and a cheaper and more natural method would be to aid and assist indogenous and existing dispensaries and medical practitioners. During last two years the Chotataraf Tushbhandar zamindars were assisted to start a dispensary at Hatibandha and the Maharaja of Cossimbazar's dispensary at Ulipur and the Saptana dispensary at Lalmonirhat were granted monthly aids. An experiment was started in 1915 of subsidising private practitioners, and two private practitioners one at Barati and another at Haragacha were sanctioned monthly assistance of Rs. 20/-, on condition of their treating poor patients of the locality free of charge, and maintaining a set of prescribed registers showing number of cases treated and giving other statistical information. Each doctor was also given a building grant of Rs. 150/- on condition that he spent another Rs. 150/- from his own pocket for a dispensary building. But the system had to be discontinued as the Surgeon General objected to the grant to be given to doctors who did not possess diplomas from recognised institutions. An effort will be made again to attract qualified doctors holding recognized diplomas to start practice in different parts of the district on a promise of getting some assistance from the District Board.

86. Passing to the subject of the adoption of special measures for fighting malaria, dealing with the outbreak of epidemics, or pushing vaccination as a prophylactic measure, it must be admitted that the resources of the district are lamentably poor. The District Board has just appointed a qualified Sanitary Inspector, and 4 doctors of the Sub-Assistant Surgeon class are also maintained by the District Board for epidemic and relief work. There is a staff of vaccinators under the Civil Surgeon paid by Government, consisting of one Inspector and 4 Sub-Inspectors. It is needless to point out that the above staff is hopelessly inadequate for any systematic work in connection with

either anti-malarial measures, vaccination, or the outbreak of epidemics. We will now briefly consider the schemes which might be proposed for this district for anti-malarial work, for vaccination, and for the improvement of the general sanitation of the district and its water supply.

87. Final and authoritative recommendations regarding the measures which should be adopted for fighting malaria are not yet available, but from the investigations of Anti-malarial measures. experts in this country, in Italy and recently in Formosa it would appear that the causes and remedies of the disease may be classified roughly under the three following heads:—

(1) Physical.

(2) Economic.

(3) Prophylactic and Therapeutical.

The exact physical conditions which account for the germination and spread of the malarial parasite have not yet been definitely ascertained, nor is it possible to state with any degree of scientific certainty how far defective drainage, rank undergrowth, the presence of marshes and insanitary pools of stagnant water suited to the breeding of malaria-carrying mosquitoes are really responsible for the prevalence of malaria in any particular locality. Dr. Bentley's Water Theory is still in its infancy, and there will be considerable practical difficulty in initiating any remedial measures on the basis of this theory. As regards the theory that the prevalence of malaria is somehow connected with those economic and sociological causes which account for the decadence and impoverishment of the people at different times and in different parts of Bengal, it is not quite certain whether the cause has not been mistaken for the effect. In any case from this point of view no special measures can be suggested besides those which are already included in the present scheme. As regards the "Hygienic treatment of the soil" or in other words, sanitary improvements regarding drainage, water-supply, the clearing of jungles, the destruction of the larvæ of the anopheline mosquitoes, it may be observed that these measures do not figure so prominently in the recent literature on

the subject. Much more importance is now attached to segregation and the use of quinine both as a prophylaxis and as a substitute. First segregate affected persons and prevent the spread of malaria contamination and then kill malaria by proper quinine treatment. But as recommended by the Italian Committee (vide report of N. P. O. Gorman Lallor) there should be a regular treatment not only during the epidemic period properly so called but also during the intra epidemic period. For practical purposes therefore our efforts in this direction might be confined to the adoption of the following measures —

- (1) Systematic quinine treatment
- (2) Incouragement of the use of mosquito curtains
- (3) Improvement of surroundings—clearance of jungles filling up of isolated pools of water and getting rid of places suitable for the breeding of mosquitoes

It is clear however that the Sanitary Inspector must have an adequate staff to be able to do any real work in any of the above lines. Luckily the village institutions which are being organised under the Circle System will be of the greatest assistance to the Inspector for work in rural areas. The President Panchayet and the other members of the Union and specially the Union Munshi ought to be of great assistance to him. He should work in close co operation with the Circle Officers. For the present his work should be chiefly confined to the areas where the Circle System has been introduced and in these areas also specially unhealthy localities will have to be selected. The Circle Officers are now engaged in making the selection.

A regular census of members of families attacked with malaria will have to be prepared and individual attention paid to each. They must be treated with proper doses of quinine. Quinine will be sold at cost price and in special cases free of charge. There should be sale of treatments of quinine consisting of twentyfour grain tablets. The ideal aimed at should be that quinine treatments should be available in every village. During the last four years the District Board has purchased Rs 18 387/

worth of quinine. A special grant of Rs. 1,250/- for the purchase of quinine has been received this year and ample provision will have to be made for the area selected for experiment.

An important department of the anti-malarial campaign will be anti-malarial education. After a good deal of trouble we have succeeded in getting from the Sanitary Commissioner a good Lantern and antimalarial slides. The Sanitary Inspector will have to arrange a regular series of lectures with the assistance of these slides. These pictures show very graphically the benefit to be derived from the use of quinine, the different stages of the malaria-carrying mosquitoes, the manner in which the malarial poison is carried by mosquitoes, the necessity for the use of mosquito curtains &c. It is needless to point out that these demonstrations will impress the agriculturist and specially the youthful minds about the value of hygiene more effectively than any amount of verbal lectures only.

In the selected area special attention will be paid to the health of the boys and girls attending the Union schools, and steps will be taken to distribute quinine to the teachers of schools of the Union Committees, and care will be taken to treat boys with doses of quinine as a preventive during the malarial seasons, and a register will be kept in each school showing the amount of quinine given to each boy.

88. Regarding vaccination it appears from last years' report that 60 licensed vaccinators worked under 4 Sub-Inspectors of vaccination and one Inspector. The number of operations performed in the whole district during the year was 74,297 against 59,493 of the preceding year. In rural areas 61,463 primary and 4,156 re-vaccination operations were performed. There was a marked increase both in the number of operations and the percentage of successful operations. The ratio of successful vaccinations in the rural areas per 1,000 of population of the district was 28.16 while the divisional ratio was 27.52. Out of a total of 61,089 available infants under one year for vaccination 15,611 or a proportion of 25.63 per 1,000 were successfully vaccinated. In

the neighbouring districts of Jalpaiguri and Dinajpur the ratio of protected children per 1,000 was over 400. There is a good deal of scope for improvement in this important department of the medical administration of the district. What the present Sanitary Commissioner points out about the difficulty which the Civil Surgeon finds in efficiently supervising the vaccination of the whole district is quite correct. But it will be hardly a desirable remedy to make the Board's Sanitary Inspector principally responsible for this work. Apart from the technical difficulty that all District Boards have not been empowered to spend money on vaccination under section 60 of the Act, it is clear that if the Board's Sanitary Inspector were to be made responsible for vaccination he would have time to attend to very little else, while in this district his chief duty should be anti-malarial work. It may be his duty to look to vaccination during his tours, but the responsibility should remain with some other officer. The Board, of course, might be made to contribute for this work, and the vaccination staff under the Civil Surgeon might be strengthened with this contribution. A very suitable way for the District Board to spend money on vaccination would be to employ vaccinators for vaccinating free of charge all boys and girls attending schools. A register should be kept at each school receiving aid from the Board to show that all the pupils have been vaccinated. Free vaccination may make the measure somewhat more popular, but the fee charged is so small that this privilege need hardly be extended unless vaccination is made compulsory.

89. During the last 4 years over a sum of Rs. 70,000/- was spent on water-supply besides Rs. 3,000/- spent by the Sanitation Committee on wells. The chief works done were 4 tanks and 150 masonry wells besides a large number of cheap wells. A bountiful sub-soil reservoir of good drinking water is available within 20 feet of the surface of every field all over the district. Cheap sources of good drinking water in the shape of kutchra ring-wells costing under Rs 10/- each being available even to the poorer raiyats, the necessity for

General
Sanitary Im-
provement &
water-supply

expenditure of fund on a larger scale on water-supply is not keenly felt in this district.

The Board spent during the past 4 years over Rs. 10,000/- on sanitary improvement of rural areas, exclusive of water-supply. The sanitary works consisted of clearing jungles and drains, of cutting outlets in water-logged areas, disinfecting wells with permanganate of potash etc.

90. Regarding the general improvement of the sanitary condition of rural areas the Sanitary Inspector will also have to look for assistance to the Circle Officers and to the officers of the village Unions. The duties of the Sanitary Inspector will be of the following kinds.—

Sanitary
Inspector and
his duties

- (i) Ordinarily improving the sanitary condition of rural areas by constantly visiting insanitary villages and taking measures for their sanitary improvement.
- (ii) Improving the sanitary knowledge of villagers by propaganda and education work.
- (iii) Taking charge of special measures—anti-malarial, vaccination etc.
- (iv) Making sanitary arrangements for special occasions—fairs, melas etc.
- (v) Emergent work on the outbreak of cholera, small-pox etc.

The rules for the guidance of Sanitary Inspectors in the employ of District Boards are under the consideration of Government. Till authoritative rules are issued by Government his attention should be given to the following duties —

I. When visiting villages he should instruct the villagers

- (i) To keep drinking water free from pollution by preventing bathing, washing of dirty clothes, and watering cattle in tanks used for drinking purposes.
- (ii) To periodically disinfect wells and clean weeds from tanks and ditches to prevent breeding of mosquitoes.
- (iii) To go to places as far away as possible from houses

for the purposes of nature, and not to foul banks of tanks and surroundings of their houses

- (iv) To keep the drains round their houses clean by removal of stagnant water &c
- (v) To cut and remove jungle and undergrowth from the proximity of their dwelling houses to allow the free play of light and air
- (vi) To have fixed places for the burial or the burning of their dead bodies and as far away as possible from their home steads

II But he should not confine himself to giving advice only

- (1) He should, whenever possible, disinfect the source of water supply of villages himself and teach the raiyats the right method of doing this. With this object he should keep a stock of alum, potash permanganate, and sulphuric acid for well disinfection, also ordinary disinfectants, such as chloride of lime and bazar perchloride of mercury for use as dejecta
- (ii) When in the course of his inspection he comes across specially insanitary houses, tanks, wells or other reservoirs of drinking water, or where the people refuse to listen to his advice and follow his directions he should submit a special report to the Magistrate Chairman with definite suggestions for improvement. In villages which fall within a Union Committee under the Local Self-Government Act he should inform the Chairman of the Union Committee of any insanitary surroundings which in his opinion require cleansing and improvement

III He should remember that his most important duty is to arouse an intelligent interest amongst the people of rural areas in matters relating to Sanitation and Hygiene, and make them realize how greatly their personal happiness and well being, as well as of the village or township in which they live depends upon their following simple rules of Hygiene and improving the Sanitary

condition of their villages. To realize the above object the Sanitary Inspector will have to cultivate close personal relationship not only with Presidents of Panchayets and other leading people of the villages but also with teachers of village schools and all such persons who are likely in any way to influence public opinion in rural areas.

For educational and propaganda work the Sanitary Inspector should organize a regular course of lectures. He should use simple language which the common people will be able to understand easily and he should demonstrate his lectures by the use of lantern slides. With the assistance of the Circle Officers and the Educational Officers, he should arrange for lectures in village schools, but the lectures should be suited to the capacity of the juveniles whom he addresses. Fairs, melas and other gatherings will afford suitable opportunities for such lectures before large audiences.

In the latest rules suggested by the Sanitary Commissioner the following occur :—

IV. In all cases of epidemic or communicable diseases, the Sanitary Inspector must take vigorous steps in consultation with the Chairman and the Civil Surgeon for the suppression of the malady. He shall also always keep ready such a stock of disinfectants and disinfecting apparatuses as may be required at short notice in the case of any such outbreak.

(i) In the case of an outbreak of small-pox, he shall obtain a supply of vaccine lymph, and immediately organize a special campaign of vaccination and revaccination among the population in the affected area, and shall personally inspect the work of the vaccination staff in this connection.

(ii) In the case of an outbreak of plague he shall immediately proceed to the spot and arrange for the disinfection by means of kerosine or crude petroleum of the houses where the plague has occurred, and of the clothing of plague patients, and the

proper disposal of plague corpses, and he shall endeavour to get the people in the infected area to evacuate their dwellings for a time

- (iii) In the case of an outbreak of malaria, he shall immediately proceed to the infected locality with a supply of quinine, and after a brief local enquiry he shall, in consultation with the Chairman and the Civil Surgeon (if necessary), organize the distribution of quinine among the inhabitants, carefully supervising the work of any epidemic doctors whom it may be necessary to appoint for this purpose
- (iv) In the case of an epidemic of cholera after proceeding to the spot to make a brief investigation of the cause and extent of the outbreak, he shall take immediate steps to arrange for the disinfection of the suspected water supplies, the proper disposal of infected clothing and cholera corpses, and the organisation of such relief measures as may be deemed necessary

V With a view to framing measures for reducing the prevalence of diseases the Sanitary Inspector shall make a careful survey of the distribution of malaria in the district and, for that purpose, shall cause the following works to be carried out systematically throughout the year, namely —

- (i) the taking of a spleen census among the children *resident in different localities*,
- (ii) the examination and mapping out of the breeding place of *anopheles* mosquitoes and
- (iii) the catching and recognition of both larval and adult insects

When the Sanitary Officer or Inspector has obtained an accurate knowledge of the distribution and relative *intensity of the malaria existing in different parts* of the district as a result of this survey he shall prepare a detailed scheme of antimalarial sanitation

designed to meet the existing conditions, and shall submit it to the Chairman of the District Board for approval and sanction.

VI. The Sanitary Inspector of the District Board should see that vaccination is carried out thoroughly and efficiently by the vaccination staff of the district. In the course of his tours of inspection, he shall carefully ascertain in the case of every village inspected, the proportion of children protected and not protected respectively by vaccination and shall report the same to the Chairman.

A great deal of the success of the work of the Sanitary Inspector will depend upon the amount of assistance and guidance he receives from the Civil Surgeon and the Sanitary Committee of the District Board of which the Civil Surgeon is the President.

CHAPTER VIII

PROGRESS OF THE DISTRICT BOARD WORKS, ROADS AND BUILDINGS

91 The amount of money spent on the Public Works Department of the Board for the last four years viz, Total expenditure and lapse 1913 14, 1914 1915, 1915 1916 and 1916 1917 was Rs 2,48,821/, Rs 3 18 247/, Rs 3 05,533/ and Rs 3 05 336/ respectively. On an average Rs 93 000/ was spent on repair works and Rs 1,54 000/ on original works annually. From 1914 15 the lapses have been almost negligible, only 0.6 per cent in 1914 15 and 0.3 per cent in 1915 16. Last year (1916 1917) the lapse was altogether nil. This satisfactory feature of the Board's administration has been due (i) to the grouping of important original works in convenient centres, (ii) to constant inspection and supervision (iii) and to proper budgeting. Execution of both the repair and original works are distributed equally throughout the year. The contractors have to give agreement that they will keep certain number of coolies at hand so that the works may go on throughout the year without any stoppage. Part bills are paid as soon as a certain amount of the work is done and this ensures almost equal distribution of payment every month.

92 This Board maintains the largest mileage of roads of any District Board in Bengal except Mymensingh, the total mileage of all classes of roads being Roads and Bridges 2,482, as corrected up to January, 1917. Construction of new roads was not found necessary excepting in the Chai area, on the eastern side of the Brahmaputra. This portion of the district in the Rowmaree thana was very sadly neglected so long. A very useful road has been constructed from Kajakata to Row-

maree and from Rowmaree to Rajihpur for a length of about 30 miles. New roads were also constructed in the north eastern part of the Kurigram sub-division where there were no roads before. The roads are always kept in fair condition. Most of the roads are bridged throughout, and great attention is being paid to have bridges constructed over the unbridged gaps as far as funds are available. During the last three years 6 big iron bridges costing Rs. 31,589/-, 38 T. I. bridges costing Rs. 80,186/-, and innumerable masonry culverts have been constructed. Owing to the War and the consequent rise in prices of iron materials, construction of iron bridges has had to be abandoned temporarily.

All important roads throughout the district are maintained by the District Board and the minor roads are maintained by the Local Boards. Very little attention was paid so long to the bridging of the Local Board roads. This is now being gradually taken up as far as funds are available. Improvement of the village roads and tracks is being taken up by the Union Committees in the different parts of the district. Considerable improvement in roads, bridges and wells was effected in several villages through this agency. The creation of Union Committees throughout the district and the making over to these village institutions the management and care of all village communications seems to offer the only satisfactory solution of this sadly neglected department of village administration. As already noted before, the experiments already made in this district in this connection have been most encouraging.

It is gratifying to note that several important masonry culverts have been constructed by private persons at their own expense. Substantial contributions have also been made by the public for assisting the Board in constructing bridges, tanks, and other works of public utility. The contribution of the public for such purposes amounted in 1913-14 to Rs. 8,675/-, in 1914-15 to Rs. 3,744/-, in 1915-16 to Rs. 3,290/- and in 1916-17 to Rs. 4,921/-.

93 Special attention has been paid to the construction of suitable Inspection Bungalows throughout the District. Great stress was laid by the Administration Committee on the importance of having suitable Bungalows in the interior of the district for the convenience of touring officers to enable them to pay frequent visits to the different parts of the district and thus keep themselves personally informed about the needs and requirements of the people. Three types of pucca Bungalows are being constructed throughout the District. The first type consists of two bed rooms, a dining room, two bath rooms, one pantry and one porch verandah which also serves the purpose of a common dining room. The second is the same as above except that it has no separate dining room. The smaller type consists of two bed rooms and two bath rooms and two verandahs at the front and the back. The construction of the larger type costs Rs 5,000/- and that of the slightly smaller type costs Rs 4,200/. During the last four years Bungalows of the new types have been constructed at Gaibandha Lalmonirhat, Rowmari Gangachara, Chilmari Domar, Dimal Jaldhaka Bhurungamari, Nagewari, Ulipur, and Hatibandha. Extensions of Tulchani and Mahimaganj Inspection Bungalows were also done within this period. We have thus constructed and improved 14 Inspection Bungalows within the last 4 years. There are now in this district 36 Bungalows and 9 Rest Houses. We have thus got comfortable Bungalows almost within 10 miles of each other on all the important roads and at most Railway Stations.

94 The magnificent District Board office building was constructed in the year 1916 at a cost of about Rs 70,000/-. It is one of the finest District Board office buildings in Bengal. It consists of nine office rooms and one central hall for the purpose of holding meetings.

During the last three years pucca dispensary buildings, according to the sanctioned type plan were constructed at Naldanga, Bhurungamari Gaibandha, Rowmari Mithapukur, Pirganj Nagewari and B. Igari. Additions and alterations on an

INSPECTION, QUARTER EIGHT.



extensive scale to the Sadar Dispensary building were also carried out during this period.

Three High English school buildings were constructed at Nilphamari, Kurigram and Saidpur, each costing about Rs 33,000/-. A similar building is under construction for the Gaibandha school. A number of pucca Middle English school buildings were also constructed at several places besides numerous C I roofed Middle English school buildings in different parts of the district.

Pucca Girls' school buildings were constructed at Domar, Kurigram, Ulipur, Sadar and Gaibandha.

Numerous masonry wells and earthen-ware pipe wells were constructed throughout the district during the last three years at an average cost of Rs 17,000/- per year. This also includes the wells constructed under the Local Board and the Union Committees. Two new tanks were excavated at Pirganj and Gobindaganj and the re excavation of the Gopalpur and the Sadyapushkarni tanks, were also carried out within this period.

CHAPTER IX.

VILLAGE DEFENCE.

95. The supremely helpless condition of the Indian villager and his inability to protect himself, his person or property, against any attacks either of organized or ordinary criminals is a matter of the most serious concern. It is obvious however that any system of police arrangement, however perfect, will not be able to afford the required protection over the vast area and teeming populations of Indian districts unless the villagers themselves realize their duties in this matter, gradually learn to protect themselves and assist and co-operate with the police in maintaining the peace and safety of their villages. Our wants in this sphere are:—

- (1) The entire absence of any spirit of self-reliance, physical courage and in most cases of any suitable weapons for self defence amongst the villagers.
- (2) The want of any organization for combined action amongst villagers in case of attacks on individuals.
- (3) The want of real co-operation between the people of villages and the regular police.

Progress will, therefore, have to be made on the following lines:—

- (1) The training of selected villagers for the work of village defence,
- (2) Greater co-operation of villagers and the proposed defence committees with the regular police.

96. Taking the last point first it might be mentioned that with the further development of the Circle System it will be gradually possible for the village courts and the rural police working under President Panchayets to gradually relieve the regular police of much petty work in

Beginnings
made

connection with village crime, but no advance in this direction has yet been made in this district. It will also be possible for the President Panchayet and the other members of the Panchayet, after the Circle System has been firmly established, to render the police much greater assistance in dealing with the crime of the Union than they are able to give now.

It is in connection with the organization of village defence societies however, that a hopeful beginning has been made. The frequency of political and other dakaities in recent years and the utter helplessness of villagers to defend themselves attracted attention, and in some districts of the Burdwan Division attempts were made to organize defence parties in villages in the year 1913. In the same year orders were also issued by Government to District Officers pointing out that "it is desirable to attempt to secure the active assistance of those residing in rural areas by strengthening their hands and placing them in a position to withstand the attacks of dakaits." During the early months of 1914, the situation of the district remained normal and therefore, no special action was considered necessary. But during the closing months of that year and early in 1915, there was a serious outbreak of crime and it was considered an opportune moment for the organization of village defence. A conference was accordingly held in February 1915 which was attended by all the Sub-Divisional Officers and the Superintendent of Police and a note was drawn up outlining the objects of the Defence Scheme and the means which should be adopted. The scheme as drawn up at the conference was submitted to the Commissioner, Mr. Bonham Carter, and a set of instructions in the vernacular was then drafted.

Scheme of Village Defence
for the Rangpur District

97. The following extracts from an English translation of the vernacular instructions which have been issued, will

explain the objects of the scheme and its organization —

"To provide means to guard against the incursion of dakaits, the District Magistrate has, at a meeting attended by the local zamindars and other men of light and leading and also by the

superior Government Officers of the district, decided to organize defence societies in selected villages throughout the district. These societies will act on their own initiative to preserve the peace of the villages in their charge watch over the movements and mode of life of suspicious characters in their villages and send timely information about them to the authorities. They will prevent the commission of daktaities as far as possible and in the event of any daktaities occurring take necessary steps for the apprehension of the daktaites."

' The Superintendent of Police, the Sub Divisional Officer or any other official deputed by the District Magistrate will call a meeting in the selected village or villages and form a society from amongst those possessing physical fitness and good moral character. In small villages the number of such men may be small, while in larger ones the number may be greater. If possible, each society should be so formed that it may be divided into 3 or 4 batches to represent different parts of the same village or different villages. Each batch should consist of 8 or 10 men living near each other, so that in case of emergency 8 or 10 men may immediately set to work in any part of the village and send information to other branches to obtain their assistance and thus the whole of the Defence Force available in any particular locality may combine for concerted action. A society so formed will be known as the Village Defence Committee. Each Committee will have a Captain and a Vice Captain. The village Dastadars and Chaukidars shall be bound to assist such societies in every way. Persons holding licenses for guns or their retainers will have to be members of the societies. If any such person refuses to be a member, his license for a gun will be cancelled. A list of men constituting the Village Committee will be kept with the Captain, another with the Dastadar, and the third at the Thana. Each member of a Village Committee will get a Samad from the District Magistrate.'

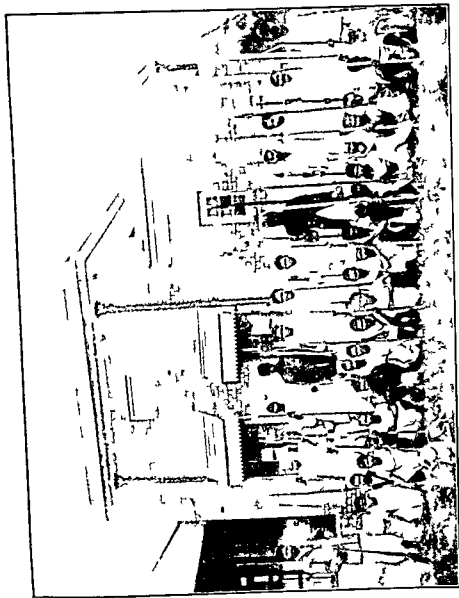
The instructions contain full directions regarding the use of arms by the members of the Defence Force. It has been stated that the District Magistrate will arrange that at least one or two

members should have fire-arms, and the Superintendent of Police will arrange that the men possessing the arms are able to use them when the occasion arises. The arming of one or two members of the Village Defence Force with fire-arms will require careful scrutiny of all existing gun licenses with a view to cancelling the licenses of those who do not really require guns or are unable to use them. Directions follow regarding the value of watching the movements of suspicious characters. "If the authorities get timely information about the movements of the Bhadralog dakaitis it is most likely that these dakaities will not be committed at all and even if the dakaitis do actually attack a village, there is every chance of the miscreants being arrested." Detailed instructions are then given as to how the Force has to act when a dakaity actually occurs. Information has to be despatched immediately to the Thana, and other neighbouring Village Defence Forces have to be warned by the beating of drums and the sounding of gongs, empty kerosine tins etc. The dakaitis are not to be attacked openly and till a sufficient force has collected. The importance of wounding and disabling at least one or two members of the gang is particularly insisted upon. There are full instructions regarding the pursuit of the dakaitis "even through different villages and across rivers".

The following general instructions were issued for the guidance of all officers concerned with the organisation of the scheme. "It is needless to point out that the success of any scheme of this nature will depend entirely upon the amount of supervision and encouragement which superior officers are able to give. If the Circle System were to be introduced throughout the district the scheme will have a much better chance of success under the supervision of the Circle Officers and the President Panchayets. For the Kotowali Thana and Gangachara, where the Circle System has been introduced, the Circle Officer should at once take up the organisation of these bodies under the instructions of the Sub-Divisional Officers. It shall be the duty of every touring officer to take every opportunity of acquainting himself with the members

of the Village Defence Force and instruct them regarding their duties which will be laid down in the rules to be issued later on. Inspection should however be made more with the object of encouraging and advising the village bodies than for the purpose of finding fault with them. It may be useful to provide an Inspection Book to be kept with the village Panchayet and in the places where the President System has been introduced with the President Panchayet in which the inspecting officer should record his notes in Bengali. The Superintendent of Police the Sub Divisional Officers and other Gazetted Officers should hold periodical parades of these bodies and see that the interest of the people does not flag and the members realise that they are performing an important duty and are of great benefit to the public. It may be useful to prescribe the award of prizes and certificates of merit to persons who show exceptional zeal or ability in the discharge of these honorary duties.

98 The preliminary work of framing rules etc was finished by the beginning of April 1915 and steps were taken to organise Village Defence Committees in selected villages by the Sub Divisional Officers and Superintendent of Police. But unfortunately before much progress could be made the work received a check on account of the dishonest and unscrupulous action of some Panchayets and village *deewanis* who taking advantage of the measures which were being adopted to organise Village Defence Committees attempted to blackmail ignorant people by pretending to make a list of all able-bodied villagers who they gave out would have to go to the War. After the lapse of some time and after the people had been reassured the work was taken up again by the Sub Divisional Officers during the cold weather of 1915. As a first step lists were made of such important villages for each sub division where it was specially necessary to introduce the scheme. The list was complete for Gaibandha in 1915 and was being collected for the other sub divisions during that year. Simultaneously with the preparation of this list Village Defence Committees were organised in different



V LLAGE DEFENCE COMMITTEE FULCHARI

centres. The scheme was complete for 12 centres of the Sadar sub-division, 6 of Nilphamari, 6 of Kurigram, and 19 of Gaibandha. The selection of men for these societies was made personally either by the Sub-Divisional Officers or the Superintendent of Police. During the District Officer's tours, members of Village Defence Committees were called up where such Committees had been formed and were paraded before him, and he personally explained to them how important their duties were and how useful they could be to the community.

During the last year a complete list has been made of all the important markets and villages inhabited by moneyed men which, either owing to their proximity to the river or for any special reason, is in need of protection. In Sadar the present list contains 40 centres, in Gaibandha 20 centres, in Nilphamari 11 centres, and in Kurigram 28 centres. The Sub-Divisional Officers are engaged in organising societies at these centres under their personal supervision. A revision of the gun licenses of the district is simultaneously going on with a view to affording equal protection to all parts of the district and to ensure that owners of guns make proper use of their guns when the contingency arises. An order has been issued that nobody is to receive a license who is not able himself to use the gun or employ a man with the requisite training for using a gun, and provision has been made for the periodical inspection of all persons who are empowered to use guns. Sanads are being issued in the form sanctioned in Government Resolution No. 627618P of 3rd April 1917 and the instructions in that circular are being carefully followed.

As stated before, only a beginning has been made, but the beginning is most hopeful. It is true that the Defence Societies have not yet succeeded in capturing any dakaits, nor is there any evidence to show that the organization of these societies has yet had much direct influence in checking crime. But it is the moral and educative effect of these societies which is the most permanent asset and it is only a question of time before their salutary effect on the security and peace of the unprotected villages begins to be realised.

CHAPTER X

PATRIOTISM

99 The district of Rangpur has not lagged behind any other district in Bengal in its enthusiasm to loyally respond to any call for any special work in connection with the War. All sections of the community, Hindus and Muhammadans, realised the justice of the cause of the Allies and showed a genuine anxiety for their victory. Here also the success of the schemes organized by the officials, either for raising money or men, was largely due to the co operation of the people and the loyal and devoted work of some of the non official members of the numerous committees and sub committees which were created all over the district. The contributions to the different War Funds made by the Maharaja of Cossimbazar, the Raja of Kakina, the Raja of Tajhat and Rai Bahadur Annada Mohan Rai Choudhury were specially praiseworthy. The following contributions were made to the different funds —

I Imperial Indian Relief Fund—Rs 10,000/

Contributed by the people of the district and sent to the Secretary and Treasurer, Bank of Bengal

II Bengal Ambulance Corps Fund specially recommended by His Excellency Lord Carmichael

A sum of Rs 73,710/ was sent to Dr S P Sarvadhikari through the Bank of Bengal. The Raja of Kakina made a princely gift of Rs 50,000/ for this fund and his timely aid was very much appreciated by Dr Sarvadhikari.

III Lady Carmichael's Bengal Women's War Fund

A sum of Rs 3,134 10 6 was sent to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor who was the Treasurer of the Fund

IV. Bengal Double Company Lady's Fund—Rs. 2,500/-.
The gift was greatly appreciated by the Ladies' Committee.

V. Contributions for the local Recruitment Committee.
Rs. 1,000/-.

VI. Bengal Battalion Patriotic Fund—Rs. 3,000/-.

VII. Contributions to the War Loan through the Treasury
and the Post Offices—Rs. 15,00,000/-.

100. For recruitment I think this district did as well as
any other district in Bengal except Dacca. Nearly
40 meetings were held all over the district and the
District and the Sub-Divisional Officers devoted a considerable
portion of their time to this work. A special District Assistant
Recruiting Officer was placed at Rangpur and Lt. F. H. Farmer
also paid the district several visits. Altogether for the Bengali
Regiment about 300 recruits were sent up, out of whom 160 were
enrolled. For the Indian Defence Force 115 applications were sent
to the Officer Commanding Presidency Brigade, Calcutta.

101. The spirit in which the people of the district discharged
their duties in connection with the War was exempli-
fied by the resolutions which were passed at a meeting
convened on the 15th of June by the Raja of Tajhat.

These resolutions ran as follows :—

- I. That the people of the Rangpur District, in public
meeting assembled to celebrate the War Loan Day
in the district, express their gratitude for this
opportunity of offering their contribution, however
humble, to help the great struggle which Great
Britain and her Allies are waging for the cause of
Justice and Liberty in Europe, and their determina-
tion to do their utmost in every way to help the
Empire during the present crisis in a manner
befitting loyal and grateful subjects of the British
Empire. They also take this opportunity to express
their deep devotion to his Majesty the King Emperor
and to pray for the speedy success of the British Arms.

- II. That this meeting places on record its high appreciation of the patriotism and public spirit of all those who have contributed to the War Loan of the district and of the devoted services of those gentlemen, officials and non-officials, who at great personal sacrifice, have made the District War Loan a success, and helped Rangpur to attain a foremost place amongst the districts of Bengal for patriotism, loyalty, and public spirit.
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CHAPTER XI.

ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL PROBLEM.

102. I have reserved for the last what is unquestionably, *the most important problem with regard to the welfare and the happiness of the people—the question of the industrial and economic development of the country.*

Importance of the subject

Modern civilization is based on modern industry and the poverty of India is admittedly the greatest drawback in the path of her progress. A more advanced and progressive system of administration, the spread of education and civilizing influences amongst the people, the successful campaign against disease and insanitation, and the consequent increase in the happiness and contentment of the people will all depend upon the industrial development of the people, the power of the country to make full use of her inexhaustible resources of mineral and agricultural wealth and of her teeming population. Fortunately the attention of all classes, and above all others of Government, has been very forcibly drawn within recent years to this important subject. The moment is also most opportune for the advancement of industrial enterprise in India, and the convening of the Industries Commission testifies to the anxiety of Government to take full advantage in India of the opportunities offered by the present situation. It is to be hoped that as a result of the recommendations of the Commission, a vigorous policy of industrial progress will be inaugurated with as little delay as possible.

103. The outstanding features of the economic framework of the district may be described as follows —

Principal features of the economic position and scheme of future progress

- (1) The entire absence of any other form of productive industry, great or small, except agriculture

- (2) The want of foresight and the absence of any strong inclination on the part of the average agriculturist to save and to make provision for the future. As a corollary, the general indebtedness of the raiyat and his lack of power to resist one or two unfavourable agricultural seasons.
- (3) The swallowing up of a substantial portion of the profits of agricultural industry by parasites and middlemen.
- (4) The want of cheap credit for agricultural and other industries.
- (5) Want of joint stock enterprise in any form.
- (6) Want of information about industrial resources and methods, and want of commercial and industrial education.
- (7) The comparative poverty of the educated *bhadralog* classes in sharp contrast with the comparative affluence of the classes in the enjoyment of the monopoly in land and the money lenders in the enjoyment of the monopoly created by restricted credit.
- (8) The capture of the entire retail industry of the district by Marwaris and other trading communities from outside the district.

Any scheme for the economic and industrial progress of the people should therefore aim at —

- (i) The improvement of the economic foundations of agricultural industry which is the main source of the wealth of the district.
- (ii) The inculcation of habits of thrift and prudence amongst agriculturists.
- (iii) The introduction of some suitable form of industrial education for increasing the industrial knowledge and enterprise of the people.
- (iv) The establishment of a department of industry in every district under the control of the District Officer.

- (v) The development of cottage industries and manufacturing industries.

104. In the chapter on agriculture the measures which might be adopted for the improvement of agriculture and for increasing the produce of the soil have been dealt with. In this chapter the place of agriculture in the economic framework of the district and the economic basis of the industry may be referred to.

Improvement
of the economic
basis of
the agricultural
industry.

As has been stated before, agriculture is the only source of productive wealth in the district and the entire population of the district either directly or indirectly depend upon the produce of the soil for their sustenance and derive their income from that industry. It has been calculated that for the whole of India "there is less than one acre of cultivated land per head of total population and not more than one acre and a quarter per head for that portion of the population which is directly supported by agriculture." The above figures describe fairly accurately the position in this district also. But it should be remembered that whatever India produces is not left for home consumption alone. She has to discharge her debts for her imports by the sale of her agricultural produce and large quantities of raw materials are also exported to other countries. Therefore, "India feeds and to some extent clothes its population from what two thirds of an acre per head can produce." Without any other sources of productive wealth it is not surprising that the mass of the population of India is constantly on the verge of starvation and want. No exact figures for the indebtedness of the Rangpur raiyat are available, but it is a fact that the majority of them are in debt in varying degrees. The acute and widespread distress amongst the agricultural classes this year on account of the collapse of the jute market is an undeniable proof of the resourcelessness of the raiyat.

The disproportionate share of the profits which go to middlemen who stand between the actual producers and the real purchasers, has already been referred to. But a somewhat detailed account is necessary of the extortionate rate of interest charged by money-

means of subsistence and his ability to pay rent, thus to drive him to mortgage unless he waits for a rent decree and the eventual sale of his holding. Some measure, possibly legislation, is urgently called for to stop the above evil. As regards the whole question of the discouragement of usury and the granting of wider powers to Courts in adjudging between debtors and creditors it is satisfactory to note that a Bill is under consideration and will probably be soon passed into law.

To attack the evil, however, at the root it would be necessary to educate the raiyats to be more self-reliant and thrifty, to look ahead and to save when he has some money and in years when the produce of his fields fetches better prices. Three crops are ordinarily raised in this part of the country. Aush paddy, jute and winter paddy. The first two come close to one another, but the interval between the winter crop which is cut in Poush and the Aush paddy which is cut in Siaban is long. It is during this interval, generally in Chaitra, that the cultivators are most in want of money for the purpose of providing their living till the next harvest. It has been suggested that instead of professional money-lenders being allowed to make private bargains with the defenceless tenants, the big Calcutta firms who are the large purchasers of jute might be induced to make advances or *dadons* to the cultivators on the security of their crops on an arrangement which would be approved by the District Officer, and which would secure for the firms a reasonable rate of interest for the capital which they will advance. If the Circle System is introduced throughout a district and reliable President Panchayets are available such a scheme does not appear very difficult to introduce. In the meanwhile, however, the multiplication of Co-operative Credit Societies seems to offer the only satisfactory solution.

105. It is not likely, however, that improvements in the economic conditions of the agricultural industry will be very rapid. In fact, the pressure of population on land is steadily on the increase. Almost all the cultivable land has already been brought under cultivation and in

Line of
progress

spite of the great mortality caused by disease and epidemics, each successive decade shows a substantial increase of population. This increasing pressure of population on land is not likely to be much relieved in the immediate future by any improvements in the method of agriculture. It will be very desirable, therefore, if employment could be found in industrial spheres, for a portion of the population which is now solely dependent on agriculture. Another source of substantial relief will be if some members of the family of agriculturists could learn some form of cottage industry for supplementing the income from their fields. The growth of cottage industries and the development of such manufacturing industries for which there may be special scope in a district would therefore appear to be the most urgent requirements for improving the material condition of the people.

106 In the most recent survey of the industrial position of Bengal the revival of cottage industries and the starting of business on individual enterprise were specially commended. Since then the establishment of the central Cottage Industry Bureau in Calcutta has given a powerful impetus to the revival of cottage industry in the Presidency. The great advantage of cottage industry would be that they could be pursued by enterprising ruraits as subsidiary to their main avocation of agricultural industry and they will not, therefore, come in direct competition with machine made goods and manufacturing industry on a larger scale. In this district a central committee and sub divisional committees have been formed and it has been decided to start work on the following lines —

(1) *Handloom Weaving*

The Rangpur District Board has trained Babu Lalit Kumar Nath at the Seerampur Weaving College and the services of this person were available for teaching improved handloom weaving in selected centres. Accordingly, he has been appointed a special weaving instructor in the Belka Middle English School where a large number of pupils from the weaving classes are available.

(2) *Basket, Cane and Bamboo Furniture Making.*

This industry would seem to have great possibilities of immediate development. There is a good deal of local demand, materials are available locally and technical skill is not difficult to acquire. The District Board in conjunction with the local branch of the Home Industry Association is about to take up this industry.

(3) *Improved Carpentry Shop.*

There is great scope for a carpentry shop to supply furniture for the local residents and for the numerous schools and other public offices of the district. Accordingly a scheme has been prepared and submitted to the Director of Public Instruction for the starting of such a shop in connection with the carpentry classes of the Technical School. If possible, a small joint-stock company will be started to finance this shop.

(4) *Hand Cheroot Making.*

Rangpur being practically the only tobacco growing district in Bengal, there is scope for this industry as a Home Industry in this district. An expert in cheroot-making is now in the employ of the Burirhat Farm and is turning out cigars, which are certainly very good for the price at which they can be sold i.e., Rs. 2/- per 100. The District Board is employing another man to impart instruction at selected centres in tobacco areas regarding the making of cheap cheroots. In Burmah the women make cigars and cheroots. If the raiyats of the district could learn to make cheap cheroots and *biris* and sell them in the neighbouring hats and shops a very lucrative employment will be opened out for them.

107. As regards larger manufacturing industries and the introduction of joint-stock enterprise the following suggestions were made by the Collector before the Industrial Commission :—

Manufacturing industry & joint stock enterprise

“Rangpur amongst mofussal stations took a very prominent part in the attempt to revive industrial enterprise in the country in the earlier days of the Swadeshi Movement. A weaving and spinning factory, a tannery, and a tobacco factory were started in

Rangpur, but all these ventures shared the fate of the other ill equipped ill managed and insufficiently financed enterprises which then sprang up all over the country. The tannery has completely disappeared and the weaving factory was taken over by the promoters of the present Bengal Lakshmi Mill. The tobacco factory is still lingering on but it has practically ceased to work and the proprietors are on the lookout to sell the concern on favourable terms to any of the successful companies which have crushed it out of existence. But in spite of these failures the people of this district are most anxious to take advantage of the present situation to start some industries in the district which might have a reasonable chance of success. But every one who is interested in the matter in any way is unanimous in holding that we shall be courting disaster again unless provision is made for expert management of the concerns which might be started and for placing the financial responsibility of the schemes in the hands of persons whose integrity would be above suspicion. It has accordingly been suggested that Government should be approached with a view to ascertaining —

- (1) Whether arrangements could be made for deciding after expert enquiry what industries are likely to be successful in this district
- (2) Whether the services of qualified experts would be available to take charge of such industries as might be selected at least for a few years to come
- (3) Whether arrangements could be made for the direction and management of the enterprise by a Board which will have a Government officer as its President or Managing Director

If Government took the lead in making satisfactory arrangements regarding the above points there is a consensus of opinion that there will be no difficulty at all about the capital for any industries which might be selected to be most suitable for Rangpur. In fact it is confidently anticipated that the schemes are likely to be over subscribed.

As regards the industries which will be suitable for Rangpur, tobacco and sugarcane would obviously seem to offer the most likely scope for successful enterprise. It is true that cigarette making has been tried and has failed but management was defective the machinery was old fashioned and capital altogether insufficient. Expert enquiry might of course show that there is no scope for another cigarette factory in the Presidency as there are already other successful cigarette concerns possessing larger capital which have captured the market and whose policy it has been to crush and choke off all new ventures by expenditure, if necessary of lavish sums of money. But on the other hand due weight should be attached to the fact that Rangpur grows more tobacco than any other district in Bengal and Cooch Behar, the other tobacco producing area in Bengal adjoins Rangpur and there is no other tobacco factory in East Bengal. If, however, a cigarette factory be considered inadvisable we may consider whether the manufacture of cigars, specially of those kinds known as Burma cigars would not be a suitable industry for Rangpur. The soil of Rangpur has been found suited for the production of every variety of tobacco and there cannot be any doubt that the tobacco leaf required for Burma cigars could be locally grown in Rangpur. The demand for Burma cigars is growing every day and perhaps more Burma cigars are now smoked in Bengal than cigars of any other kind. There may be scope for the manufacture of stick tobacco in this district. The manufacture of sugar also would seem to offer a very good opening in a District like Rangpur. I understand that the Assam Government have started a large sugar factory and the results obtained have already been very encouraging. Rangpur already grows a fair amount of sugarcane. The area under this crop is daily increasing and there are large tracts of uncultivated lands in thanas Badarganj, Mithapukur, and Pungunj which are reported to be fit for the cultivation of sugarcane. In connection with the manufacture of both tobacco and sugarcane it might be mentioned that experiments are being carried on at the Government Farms in this District with

the special object of introducing better varieties of these crops which will have a heavier yield and of which the produce will be of a superior quality

Besides sugar and tobacco there are some persons who think that the manufacture of paper might also prove to be a profitable business in Rangpur. Comparatively large supplies of bamboo and grass of various kinds are available in this District and the Railway communications are good. A paper factory in Rangpur will be within easy reach of possible markets for paper.

Another feasible scheme would be the starting of an Aluminium Factory in Pangpur. There is no such factory in Eastern Bengal where the demand for enamelled ware and aluminium ware is enormous and is daily increasing.

Of course, the labour factor in connection with all these possible industries is not altogether favourable and the wages of labour in this District are comparatively dearer than in Behar and Western Bengal.

As regards the question of technical management it is suggested that the expert who is to run the industry should be selected by Government on the sole consideration of capacity for managing the business without any regard to his nationality or any other personal considerations. But the greatest stress is laid on Government appointing a Board of Directors with an official Chairman just as the Chairmen of the Central Co-operative Banks are officials. A specially selected and trained Deputy Collector or an officer of the Financial or Accounts Department may be made the Chairman. The other members of the Board might be selected from the shareholders of the joint stock concern.

Industrial Education 108 The following suggestion about Industrial Education is made —

‘A University College has been established at the headquarters of the District which will teach the usual Arts, and later on Science Courses prescribed by the University. There is a strong feeling however, that as the people are subscribing such a large

sum of money amounting to seven lakhs of rupees it would be eminently desirable if, in addition to general education up to a certain standard, arrangements could be made for imparting technical and industrial education on some well-defined practical subjects which would help the young men of the District to make their living in industrial avocations. The technical education might relate preferably to industries which it might be decided to start in Rangpur, and for which there may be scope in Rangpur. Another special reason which makes such a suggestion worth considering is that at Rangpur we have already got a Technical school which teaches Survey, Carpentry and Black-smithing and which is maintained jointly by the District Board and Government. It is felt that the amount of good done by this Institution is perhaps not commensurate with the amount of money spent on it from public funds, and an expansion of the Institution on industrial lines will be a very desirable improvement. The Rangpur public will be prepared to subscribe more money if the existing school were made an annexe of the Carmichael College with an arrangement for some forms of practical industrial education. The Committee may therefore consider whether it may not be advisable to have one or two District Industrial Institutions on the above lines instead of having only centralized Technological and Industrial Institutions at Dacca and at Calcutta."

109. As regards the desirability of organizing a Department of Industry in each district the following suggestions were made before the Industrial Commission :—

*Department
of Industry
for the dis-
trict*

"The work of Government in assisting industrial enterprise in the country should not be wholly centralised. The new Department of Industry which it is assumed will be organized for each Provincial Government should not remain a centralised force only, but there should be a Department of Industry in each district and the industrial resources of each district should be examined and developed. Industry should thus form a part of the ordinary

programme of district administration like Co operative Credit, Education and Agriculture and the District Officer should be given a controlling voice in the affairs of this department of the administration also. If the main object of the present movement be the industrial education of the people it will be obviously unwise not to enlist the active co operation of the District Officer in the movement.

If the above view be accepted the points for determination would be —

- (1) What should be the relation of the District Officer with the Department of Industry and the Director of Industries
- (2) What should be the relation of the District Officer and the Department of Industry with the public with regard to industrial matters. To take the second point first it will be readily admitted that the control of Government over industries which are selected for demonstration should be thorough for the time Government is responsible for the success of the business. If it be decided to assist Cottage Industries through Co operative Central Banks or private individuals with money grants no such direct control of Government over these industries would perhaps either be desirable or necessary. In theory the attitude of Government officials towards the new movement should be the same as laid down by the Government of India (Resolution of 17th June 1914) for the co operative movement. The movement must in its essence be a popular one and nothing should be done to weaken the feeling among co operators that it is based upon self reliance and independence. And if in the case of Pioneer industries Government should elect to interfere in industrial enterprise and manage these industries through their own officers such

interference will be only provisional and it will be for the object of encouraging the people to invest capital in such industries and to ensure the final success of the industries, it being clearly understood that Government control will come to an end the moment these objects have been attained. To ensure the co-operation of the public in the movement, it might be desirable to have an "Advisory Board" for each district for dealing with industrial questions.

As regards the first point the Director of Industries should no doubt be finally responsible for the selection of special industries and have direct control over the experts who might be appointed by Government to run the industries. The chief function of the District Officer would thus be to bring the new Department in touch with the people, and secure that assurance and confidence in the undertakings of the Department which his close association with the movement is likely to inspire."

110. This section appropriately closes with the account of the Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition which was held last cold weather and was opened by Lord Carmichael.

The Industrial
Exhibition at
Rangpur

The Exhibition was organised with threefold objects — firstly, to afford an opportunity to the people of the district to acquaint themselves with the result of the measures adopted by Government for improvement of agriculture, secondly, to widen their knowledge of the various kinds of articles which are being manufactured in different parts of the country, and thirdly, to show the practical working of such cottage industries and handicrafts as might be suitable to the conditions obtaining in the district.

The Exhibition was opened by His Excellency the Governor of Bengal on the 10th November last. It was opened to the public on the 11th November and about 15,000 people including Indian women and school boys visited the Exhibition.

The Exhibition was divided into the following sections —

Section I — Cottage Industry

The following industries were demonstrated in the Exhibition —

- (1) *Manufacture of matches by hand machine* The process of manufacture the machinery and materials were explained to the visitors. The inventor Dr Mahendra Chandra Nandi of Tipperah has been awarded a gold medal for his machinery. The matches manufactured in the Exhibition were quite good. The machine has been purchased by the Honble Maharaja Su Manindra Chandra Nandi.

I C R

- (2) *Button Manufacture*

The manufacture of buttons from mother of pearls was demonstrated with a hand machine. The buttons manufactured are good and cheap.

- (3) *Improved Handlooms*

Some improved handlooms were demonstrated by the Weaving Master under the Government of Bengal.

- (4) *Carpet Weaving*

The weaving of fine carpets was shown by two women of Kalimpong Industrial School.

- (5) *Weaving of Silk and Cotton Cloth*

The weaving of silk cloth was demonstrated by S. S. Bagchi & Co of Murshidabad and of cotton cloth by Captain Johnson, Manager of Sudpur Nut Settlement, in Rangpur.

- (6) *Wicker Work*

Wicker work such as the making of cane furniture was shown by two workmen from Sylhet.

- (7) *Cigar and Cigarette Manufacture*

The manufacture of cigarettes was demonstrated by the Rangpur Tobacco Factory and of cigars by the Rangpur Burirhat Farm.

Section II.—Agriculture.

The Exhibits in this section have already been described before.

Section III.—Education.

In this section Messrs. Macmillan & Co., sent a good collection of educational appliances, equipments, maps, etc. which were very much appreciated. The Kashi-Kishore Technical School, Mymensingh, sent some fine samples of brass, iron and wood-work turned out of their workshop. Students of the Calcutta Working Men's Institution, The Jalpaiguri Zilla school, Rangpur Zilla school, The Rangpur Training school, and Rangpur Girls' Middle English school sent some interesting exhibits such as pictures, globe, relief maps, etc.

The Committee took this opportunity of drawing the attention of the public to the education of the deaf and dumb and blind. Some boys from the institutions in Calcutta for the education of these unfortunates were brought to the Exhibition and the methods of imparting instruction to them and the result thereof were demonstrated. Two silver medals have been awarded to these two institutions for their excellent work in this direction.

Section IV.—Lectures with lantern slides.

A series of popular lectures on malaria, its origin, cause, infection, prevention, cure, cinchona plantation, manufacture and use of quinine were delivered by Assistant Surgeon, Jahar Lal Das and were very much appreciated. As mentioned above, similar lectures on agriculture were delivered by Mr. Smith, Deputy Director of Agriculture.

Section V.—Indigeneous arts and industrial products.

There was a good collection of indigenous articles some of which are mentioned below :—

Ivory and sandal-wood work, including painting on ivory from Delhi; ivory carving from Murshidabad; fine muslin and cloths from Dacca; silk cloth from Benares and Murshidabad;

woolen fabric and carpets from Cawnpore, brassware from Jaipore; sandal-wood work from Mysore and Bombay; surgical instruments and chemical products from the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works, Calcutta; metal wares from Khagra and Murshidabad; brass and iron works from Calcutta, Multan and Murshidabad; Tibetan curios from Darjeeling; pottery and glasswares from Calcutta and Jubbulpur; fine cloths from Mayurbhanj, Bombay and Bankura; fine endi cloths from Gauhati; hosiery from Benares and Pabna; clay toys from Krishnanagar and Chunar; stationery such as paper, pencils, penholders and nibs from Calcutta, Madras, Multan and Bombay; wicker works and fine maps from Sylhet.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

111. The administration of a district in India has been rightly considered to be the hub of the wheel of the entire administrative machinery of the British Empire in India. Nothing so directly and so closely concerns the welfare of the people. There is a growing feeling that on account of the ever-increasing complexity and multiplicity of the work which now devolves on the District Officer and also on account of the change in the attitude of the people towards the District Officer in advanced areas, the relations of the people with the District Officer are not so intimate and personal as they used to be. A Committee was recently appointed in Bengal with the special object of ascertaining what measures could be adopted for bringing the Executive Officers of Government into closer touch with the people and has submitted an exhaustive report. In examining this important question it is very necessary to attach due importance to those aspects of the administration of a district which have come into prominence in recent times. A district is but an epitome of what is going on in the country. The rapid changes which have come over the aspirations and demands of the people perhaps require some readjustment of the machinery of District Administration. Education, Local Self-Government, Sanitation, Hygiene, Co-operative Credit and Industrial Progress are departments of the administration which are daily assuming far greater importance than they possessed before. The duties of the District Officer may be roughly divided into three categories—firstly, those which are more or less of a routine nature such as the collection

of revenue, submission of statements and reports—secondly, those which are connected with such important departments as the supervision of the criminal administration of the district, the supervision of the work of the Police &c and lastly those which are coming into greater prominence with the spread of education and advanced ideas amongst the people. I think, the time has come for considering how far the duties of the District Officer which he has to perform in his capacity as the Collector of the district may be delegated to other officers as the safeguards and checks for the proper discharge of such duties have been so fully developed that this department of the administration does not require as much special administrative ability as it did before. With regard to the duties of the second class it has to be considered whether the District Officer may not safely share responsibility with such senior members of the Civil Service who are generally posted in the district as Joint or Additional Magistrates. It appears, however, very necessary that the first class of duties which require fact, knowledge of the people and sympathy with them, powers of organization and initiation should be kept in the District Officer's own hands. Unless this branch of the District Officer's work receives that amount of attention which it deserves it does not matter how small the district is over which a District Officer is placed—it will be difficult for him to ever come into really intimate and close relations with the people of the advanced provinces like Bengal. Both the Bengal Committee on District Administration and the Imperial Committee on Co-operation in India have recommended the appointment of a senior officer to co-ordinate the work of the Agricultural, Co-operative and Industrial Departments of each province. This officer is to be styled the Development or Improvement Commissioner but it is obvious that this new officer sitting at the head of a department will not be able to effect any radical changes unless he is ably supported by the District Officers in charge of the administration of each district, and unless each District Officer constitutes himself into the Development or Improvement Officer of his own district. If the scheme

of District Administration is slightly altered on the lines suggested above, two distinct advantages may be anticipated. Greater importance will be attached to such departments of the administration which are not now receiving their due share of attention and the District Officer will be relieved to a great extent of such routine and unimportant duties which might well be looked after by subordinate officers and therefore have more time to attend to the more complex and important duties of District Administration.

112. Besides the regrading of the different departments under the District Officer with a view to attaching more importance to those departments which are directly connected with educational and economic progress of the district, measures are urgently needed for ensuring a continuity of policy in District Administration, and a decentralization and simplification of the administrative machinery with a view to enabling the District Officer to do the maximum amount of good to his district during the comparatively short time he may hold charge of it. Regarding the important question of securing a continuity of policy in District Administration the scheme of having a permanent Sub-District Officer for each district deserves careful examination. Equally important in this connection is the question of the period for which a District Officer is kept in a district. For, it is obvious that the most capable and sympathetic officer will fail to achieve anything for the improvement of the district unless he has time to know his district, gauge its real wants, and acquire sufficient influence over the most influential and enlightened people of the district to carry through important schemes for the advancement of the district. Unfortunately there is a tendency to regard the District Officer as only an automaton for keeping the wheel of the administration going. But, obviously, everything will depend upon his personality and the opportunity he gets for doing real service to the district of which he is placed in charge. As executive orders on this subject have proved of little avail and as the usual life of a District Officer in a district averages about a year, there are strong reasons for

urging a statutory period to be fixed for the post of a District Officer. Three years ought to be the minimum.

Lastly, District Officers feel that there is a tendency towards the weakening of their authority and therefore of their sense of responsibility by the undue centralisation of special departments and the intervention of too many controlling authorities, and the consequent difficulty and delay in getting any schemes of local improvements sanctioned and passed. In my opinion, a District Officer should have far greater real powers in educational and even in police matters than he has at present and he should also have greater freedom in dealing directly with Government in matters relating to the welfare of his district.

113 Along with the adoption of measures for securing a continuity of policy in District Administration we must also develop a scheme by which the people of the district concerned should themselves be made more and more interested in their own affairs and responsible for carrying on a continuous policy of progress of their district or in other words of developing

Necessity
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ing a real and active scheme of Local Self Government. The drawbacks of the present situation are that Village Self Government in rural areas is quite undeveloped and even the scheme of centralized self government through the District Board is defective in many respects. As has been repeatedly pointed out Local Self-Government to be organic must be built up from below and cannot be superimposed from above on weak or non-existent foundations. Fortunately, a carefully thought out scheme of Village Self Government under the aegis of the scheme of administrative reform known as the Circle System is about to be introduced throughout Bengal. The details of the scheme have already been carefully explained in previous chapters. It has also been seen how in every important department of the administration dealing with the welfare of the people, the newly started village institutions of the district have played a most useful part. In my opinion, no scheme of reform for the improvement of District Administration is so

important as the introduction of the Circle System and the scheme of Village Self-Government which is included in it, and therefore no time should be lost in extending the scheme widely through the presidency. As regards the District Board which is practically the only self-governing institution for rural areas it might be pointed out that in the present scheme there is not much scope for the members to take active part in the administration of the affairs of the Board. The Committee System should be still further developed so that each important department will be directly in charge of a Committee of the Board who will have some administrative powers. The District Board itself should have wider powers and it is well worth considering whether the District Board should not have a voice in the administration of all the departments which are concerned with the material and intellectual progress of the district *e.g.* Co-operation, Education, Industry etc. In the administration of the District Boards also, there is the same lack of a continuity of policy as in the administration of the district generally. It should be considered, therefore, whether we should not have a permanent Vice-Chairman of the District Board. Possibly, the same officer who will be the permanent Sub-District Officer may be the permanent Vice-Chairman of the District Board. The above changes will make self-government more homogeneous throughout the district, will afford greater opportunities to the people to take part in the administration of their own affairs and will provide for a continuity of policy with regard to those departments in which a continuity of policy is so vitally necessary.

114. As regards the programme for the amelioration of the condition of the people of rural areas, outlined in this note it would perhaps be desirable to add a word of caution against taking too sanguine a view of the efficacy of any such schemes or cherishing any hopes of any immediate return for our labours. The forces of darkness and inertia which have to be dislodged are too vast and too hoary to yield to treatment at once, and one or two bad agricultural years would perhaps be sufficient to sweep away the good results achieved by years of patient toil. But still

the work has to be done and no more time should be lost in taking action. For, however remote and uncertain the results, there can not be any question that the objects sought to be attained are perhaps the most important in the whole range of Indian Reforms. For by our toils in such humble fields alone can we hope in time to bridge the great gulf which now divides the educated and enlightened classes of the Indian community from the masses of the people and thus introduce that homogeneity into Indian national life which is so urgently needed to make every fresh constitutional and administrative reform a real and organic advance.

THE END.